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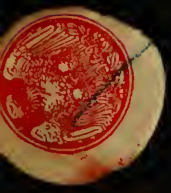

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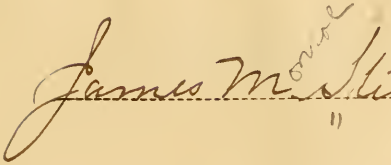

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WASHINGTON, D. C.
JAMES M. STEWART.
1894.

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PREFACE.

—o—

In presenting this volume of selections, gathered from the mass of my writings—from publications of various kinds and from those reserved from publication, I may be pardoned for a little conceit in stating that every line in this book was put in type and page-form by myself, in the quiet of my room, during my leisure hours, while I was a clerk in the War Department,—an occupation most pleasing to me;—may it now be highly profitable.

I should like to append to the above statement a short account of some of the events of my life—varied by a thousand incidents outside the common experiences, since I left my father's door, to make my own path in the world, in 1833, when I was eleven years old; but perhaps the public would not care to follow me in the narrative.

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SYNOPSIS

OF

HISTORY, BIOGRAPHY, EULOGY.

—

The peopling of Countries. Growth of Nations. Founding of Dynasties. Struggles for the overthrow of oppressive Rulers.

Ancestors of General Washington. Establishment of a branch of the family in America.

Youth of Washington. His first Love. His Studies. Labors and Sports of the Gentry of Virginia in the olden time. The Chase.

Early Manhood of Washington. The French and Indian War. His first Battle. Defeat and death of Braddock.

Coming of Mrs. Washington and her Children to Mount Vernon.

First mutterings of the storm of the Revolution. Battle of Bunker Hill.

The first Congress in Philadelphia. DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

Washington appointed Commander of the American Army. Assumes command at Cambridge.

"Boston in Chains." Movements of the Patriot Forces. The British evacuate the City.

League of the Colonies for the prosecution of the struggle for Independence. The coming of Lafayette, Steuben, Kosciusko, and other foreigners to fight in the Patriot Cause.

War of the Revolution. Hardships encountered by the Army. Difficulties of the Commander-in-

Chief. Treason of Arnold. Defection among the Generals. Advent of the French Allies and Triumph of the Patriots.

WASHINGTON REFUSES A CROWN!

Resigns command of the Army, and retires to his Estate.

Formation of the Federal Union. Washington the first President.

Death of Washington.

Mount Vernon. By the Tomb of Washington.

Apotheosis.

WASHINGTON.

EULOGY.

The Manuscript of the following Epic, presented by the Author to the U. S. National Museum, is preserved in one of the cabinets containing the relics of the hero and statesman: General Washington.

Days swiftly pass along the path of time,
And few events their histories comprise;
But years and centuries move in march sublime,
And epochs mark where changes vast arise.

The Spirit of the Lord sweeps over lands,
And tribes appear that break and till the soil;
Hamlets and cities grow, where defter hands
Ply for the world their vast and varied toil.

For all the vernal affluence: bud and bloom,
The summer fields, and autumn's rich array,
The withered leaves and grasses, and the gloom
Which mantles nature's darlings in decay.

Thus do the nations have their times of spring,
Flower, fruit,—perchance the winter destiny:
For power abused and honor lost will bring
Dull languor, nerveless life, and atrophy.

As nature's seasons fruitage times present,
So phases social have their rise and range:
Thought quickens hope; then faith grows eloquent,
Prompts higher aim and dares the greater change.

With boundaries spreading, numbers multiply—
Some arrogantly claiming princely state;—
The brave defend—they die for liberty,
Or bow before inexorable fate.

But God is right! Though peoples be in fault,
His wiser plan and purpose never fail;
His agents forward press, nor ever halt,
Though tyrant reign, or anarchy prevail.

What time, amid the whirl of varying scenes,
The call is heard as honor makes demand,
The need imperative decrees the means,
Ordains for work and nerves the willing hand.

A nation's annals, on historic page,
Oft point the advent of a better reign:—
With Pericles there came the golden age;
With Moses, Israel broke her bondage chain.

So thou, my country, when the time was ripe
For liberty, didst summon mighty aid,
And from thy chivalry its noblest type
Arose to lead, nor ever trust betrayed.

He wore the stamp of promise on his face:
  Peer of fair Egypt's found, adopted one;
And the high honors of a loyal race
  Were ripe in him, Virginia's nobler son.

Endowed with health in nature's generous hour,
  Of stature formed from manhood's highest plan,
Gentle, yet strong, and faithful in his power,
  In thought and act he was a worthy man.

Of warrior strain came he,—of blood approved,
  Whose full, deep volume beat with pulses strong,
Such as to mercy deeds mankind hath moved,
  Nor borne, with patience, tyranny and wrong.

The records of his ancient line commence
  Where Gallia's shores breast back the northern sea;
From listed fields they bear their honors thence,
  In the proud ranks of Norman chivalry.

But not alone with tourney shield and lance,—
  In battle's graver scenes their deeds are known:
Their challenge sounds far in the van's advance,
  Where Harold's fall o'erthrows the Saxon throne.

In royal court, or march of war they move;
  To council wisdom, and to field they bring
Their loyal zeal, and by devotion prove
  They love their country and revere their king.

A vigorous stock, adventurous—their increase
  Pours out abroad abundant overflow.—
They bear, with shield, the olive branch of peace;
  They wear the sword, but strike no useless blow.

Vast realms remote, beyond where ocean rolls
  Far surges tossing westward crests of foam,
Invite their willing feet, their earnest souls,
  With promise of contentment and a home.

Beyond, and still beyond the sunset skies,
  They urge the straining sail, the gliding keel;
And other lands, where other stars arise,
  The empire of their hopes and dreams reveal.

They greet the fair America,—a bride
  Of virgin freshness and of ample dower;
The forest waves them welcome, and thy tide,
  Potomac, wafts them to her sylvan bower.

The pride of ancestry is seldom vain;
  But honors falsely borne can naught avail;
As streams, from fountains far above the plain,
  Reproachful flow where soil and verdure fail.—

But where, with ample depth, the ancient mold,
  Undrained by wasteful tilth, in richness lies,
How fair the brooks and pastures, as of old,
  And stately trees with swelling crowns arise.

From such high ancestry, of old renowned,
Came he, our favored country's gifted one;
So lived, so moved he, that the world hath crowned
With proudest bays the brow of WASHINGTON!

YOUTH, AND BOY-LOVE OF WASHINGTON.

Deem it not idle gossip which declares
That friends impalpable to Earth return,
From higher realm, to ponder early cares,
Or minister where home's loved altars burn.

Man may not judge,—perhaps can never know
The secret link that souls to substance bind,
Nor that it breaks, dissevered by the blow
That leaves a soulless mass, inert, behind.

A presence grand, by mortal eyes unseen,
A shadow form, perhaps, in yonder hall
Holds mystic court, and, with benignant mien,
Gives gracious benediction unto all;

Or still, with winning voice and placid face,
Renews the ancient, hospitable care,
In kind solicitude, with courteous grace,
For loving pilgrims, reverent, gathered there.

For he had boyish loves—this man so great,
Who bore a nation's shield upon his arm:
Friends, serfs, mute pets, vast acres of estate,
And modest maiden beauty's wooing charm.

Meseems that now, by field, or purling brook,
His spirit lingers, as in early youth,
When, pondering kindly deeds, his spirit took
From nature beautiful its trust and truth.

Thou, broad Potomac, veiled in early morn,
Or silver-surfaced in the summer noon,
Or starred by myriad worlds to glory born:
Companions of the sweet, night-wedded moon;

Ye woods, once haunt of red deer shy and fleet,
Ye glens, with deep recesses cool and dim,
And ye, soft lawns that soothe the fevered feet,
All, all are mutely eloquent of him.

Here youthful sports with manlier deeds were blent;
Here first-love wings were folded in his breast:—
The sweet revealment! witching discontent!
The dear delirium! ecstasy's unrest.

Perhaps he trod these lawns in pensive bliss,
As tender fancies fanned the mystic flame,
And feigned in fragrant flowers his lady's kiss,
Or whispered to the amorous wind her name.

Or oft he launched his boat, with careless grace,
When thou, O river! wooed his languid oar,
And fancied on the moonlit waves her face,
Or dreamed her sweet voice calling from the shore

O youth's first bliss! heart gold without alloy!
Hope thrilled by visions beautiful and sweet!
Thou bright weft woven in the web of joy,
Of memory's darlings thou art best, complete.

Ah! ever they who young love's anguish know,
Have kindly natures in life's later day;
So withered flowers, or buds which never blow,
Retain some fragrance in their slow decay.

Such fate was thine, thou gentle youth; thy love
With faith's ethereal veil invested one;
But not for thee the thoughtless girl,—thy dove,
Dear, but perhaps unworthy Washington.

EARLY MANHOOD. HIS LABORS AND SPORTS.

Broad are his views, his aspirations high,
As vigorous youthhood, with elastic feet,
Moves toward the goal, as years are passing by,
Where the great chart of life shall be complete.

Home duties well performed with zealous care,
A spirit free and bold, and glowing health,
And blood electric as the mountain air,
Endow him with the best of nature's wealth.

To science drawn, to learned themes inclined,
To emulate the honor of his race,
He stores with treasure things his active mind,
And toil and sport develop manly grace.

But late, in memories of thy ancient men,
Were pictured scenes of high enjoyment there;
And history points, and fame's delightful pen,
Thy hospitable homes, Virginia fair.

Mount Vernon hall, in halcyon days of old,
Had many guests: proud men and stately dames,
Culpeper, Fairfax, and the scores untold
That bore, with honor, honorable names.

There hours of pleasure flew on joyous wing;
The store was ample, the enjoyment free;
They drank to beauty, honor, and the king,
And some there were who drank to liberty.

Broad ran the peaceful river in the east;
Far spread the grander forests in the west;
And many a savage brute, or gentler beast,
Made pastime rare for master and for guest.

Fancy presents, in vivid tints, the view
  Of mettled coursers, fleet and rare of race,
That spurn, with polished hoofs, the glistening dew,
  And loudly neigh, impatient for the chase.

Behold! the autumn dawnlight hints the day;
  The gray, cool mist on field and valley lies;
The joyous hounds are free; away! away!
  A stag of ten must be the morning prize!

Deep-voiced, the cries far cadences awake:
  Sonorous base and lighter melody;
Such sylvan harmonies resounding make
  For huntsman's ears the sweetest minstrelsy.

And oak-crowned height and winding forest dell,
  Responsive, wakening to the merry morn,
With frolic echoes join the strains to swell
  Of baying hounds and calls of bugle-horn.

By sunlit hills, and over fragrant vales,
  By woodlands deep and many a streamlet ford,
The hunt extends, till youthful ardor fails,
  And ample store awaits the festive board.

In sport like this, or in the grave debate,
  In husbandry, or with the ready pen,
The old-time fathers glorified the State,
  And lived the lives of strong and worthy men.

Mother of stalwart sons and daughters now,
A vigorous stock in youth or life's full prime,
Mother of statesmen, O Virginia! thou
Mayst well exult and point thine earlier time.

The French and Indian War.

Foremost for right in every high employ,
Alive to all that makes life excellent,
He presses onward, and the noble boy
In honor's cause is brave and eloquent.

The pride and vigor of his knightly race,
The high ambition of those ancient sires,
Point ever unto danger's foremost place,
And calls for war revive the fiercer fires.

For hark! from lands remote, beyond his gaze,
In anguish notes the midnight cries of fear
Resound from scenes of woe where hamlets blaze,
And shrieks of wives assailed appal the ear.

And all the lion in his soul awakes!
"Arm for defence! the voice of manhood cries;
Nor danger daunts, nor toil his purpose shakes,
Nor all the tears that dim a mother's eyes.

To meet the Indian foes he sounds his call,
  Which, reaching hills and valleys near and far,
Summons the hardy yeomen to the hall,
  To strike with him the awful blow of war.

Listens Dinwiddie, in his place of power,
  The wail of wives and many a hapless one:—
Mount and away! and glory strikes the hour,
  Morn of thy nobler life, O Washington!

Led by their youthful chief, the warriors ride
  Through tangled thicket vale and mazy wood,—
Men of fierce bravery, and true and tried,
  That oft the savage onsets have withstood.

Not then as now the path those brave men trod;
  No pleasant fields beyond the vistas lay;
Nor harvest glories crowned the upturned sod;
  Wild, wildering and dangerous was the way.

The dark barbarian, skilled in forest lore,
  In ambush lurked, a swift and wary foe,
Or plied, by shaded streams, with noiseless oar,
  In birch canoe, and struck his deadly blow.

Sternly, to wreak their vengeance and the doom
  Of war, those yoemen toiled along their path;
Nor heeded they the solitude, the gloom
  Of nature and the tempest voice of wrath.

Where trees their tangled branches overarched,
By cliffs, the ramparts of the Indian braves,
Where copses thick could shield a foe they marched,
And lonely glens might be their forest graves.

They struck the savage in his native haunt,
And he recoiled, abashed if unsubdued;
Thenceforth less vicious were his boast and taunt,
His mien less stubborn, insolent and rude.

—

Let history pause, and for a moment trace,
In thoughtful mood, by rule of right sustained,
The fearful wrongs inflicted on the race
From whom this glorious continent was gained.

They bade the Spaniard welcome to their shore.
They fed him from their groves, their sylvan herds,
And learned full soon the weight of chain they wore,
Forged by the treachery of wily words.

Untaught of art, to gentleness inclined,
The honor of their homes they freely gave;
The stranger found them hospitable, kind,
And made of each a toiling, hopeless slave.

Their faith was simple, suited to their need;
No more to know, they scarce could go astray;
The stranger pointed heaven, through mystic creed,
And left them, rudely taught, to grope their way.

Led gently on, by thoughtful, patient heed,
They might have risen to a high estate;
As taught, the cross, in time of sorest need,
Became to them the finger-post of fate.

They lived the life of forest innocence,
By social arts and sophistries untried;
Their deeds, their histories taught them eloquence,
And nature bountiful their wants supplied.

They loved and were beloved; the cares of home,
If few, comprised the dearest joys they knew;
In mighty woodlands they were free to roam;
In war relentless, but in friendship true.

They had their own, the simpler forms of state;
Aroused, with manly fortitude they strove;—
Mark we the line between barbarian hate
And ours, should evil menace those we love,

And would we fail th'avenging blade to draw
Against invaders of their peace and rest,
Or bow supinely to the social law,
And leave the wrong and outrage unredressed?

We deem that Providence designed this land,
Once wilderness, for men to wisely use;
'Tis won—'tis ours;—thus let the record stand,
Nor dare the means of conquest to excuse!

Flout not his memory with word of scorn;—
  Lo! where the trees their bending branches wave,
And where the ploughshare sires our golden corn,
  The red-man's home, the hapless Indian's grave.

—

But French invaders sought the prize to wring
  From those who urged more honorable gain—
Who claimed, by title from the British king,
  The right of free dominion and domain.

Thou, gallant Braddock, felt their craft and power,
  Their vengeance by Monongahela's shore,
Where unseen foemen poured, in battle hour,
  Libations to their god, the British gore.

And there, as one endowed with charmed life,
  Fought the young Washington, a mark full fair,
Unharmed, untouched, through all the awful strife,
  Where bullets rang, where arrows filled the air.

The hand of God protected, as with shield,
  From the fierce rage of war that peerless form,
For future work, upon a vaster field
  Scatheless to ride amidst a wilder storm.

Such was the rude baptismal rite of fire
  Which gave America her chieftain sage:
Wise to advance, like Fabius to retire,
  And win for freedom freemen's heritage.

The Birth of Liberty.

In council calm, as in the battle bold,
  His ardent soul yearns for the state's defence,
Where sweeps, o'er venerable statesmen old,
  The wave of Henry's glorious eloquence.

New trust in Heaven, of patriot wisdom taught,
  And hope for man are in the public mind
Advancing with a swelling tide of thought,
  To hail the morn of glory for mankind.

The greed of arrogance, the ruthless sway,
  The bondage with inevitable blight,
Are being measured, in the solemn day,
  Against the public due, the common right.

Fields dressed for beauty by the plough and hoe,
  Vast rivers smoothly wending to the sea,
All harvest nature with a smile aglow,
  Teach that wise-thoughtful peoples should be free.

As flush the eastern skies with coming day,
  As sunlight broadens into morning prime,
So shall the gloom of ages pass away,
  And leave a brighter brotherhood sublime!

Home-Life at Mount Vernon.

Soldier and statesman, yet a man withal,
  Formed to adorn the sphere of happier life,
The lover brings, to grace his rural hall,
  A mistress beautiful, a faithful wife.

And children with her come, to lend the scene
  The innocence of youth, its tender joy:
A gentle girl with pleasant eyes serene,
  And, a fond mother's pride, a noble boy.

To these he turns with all the glow of love
  That beams benignly in a father's eyes;
For Heaven hath sent the lonely nest a dove,
  But gift of offspring of his blood denies.

Faith-winged, his hours of happiness increase,
  And added burdens only blessings seem;
His love is purity, his home is peace.
  And all his joy is like a morning dream.

With vast domain—almost a royal dower—
  And teeming meads that generous gifts bestow,
And friendships, ever charm of social hour,
  His cup is full, with brimming overflow.

And thou wert lovely in the olden time,
  Mount Vernon, fairer in the days of old;
Rich in the products of a genial clime,
  In nature's blazon-work of green and gold.

Thy bowers, long desolate, like cypress shade
That gives to solitude funereal gloom,
Were gay with life in fairest hues arrayed,
With manliest men and woman's bud and bloom.

There the tired wanderer for the night reposed;
The unfed hungry from thy gates away
Was never turned; thy doors were never closed
To stranger guest, forbidding him to stay.

Thy master, whose mild law was absolute,
Where spread his acres and their boundaries ran,
In courtesy, though grave, displayed the fruit
Of nature's master-work, a high-bred man.

Thy mistress ruled her home with matron grace,
And smiling homage owned her gentle reign;
Her queenly dignity, her pleasant face,
Inspired devotion, but forbade to feign,

They held their servants by the tie of friend,
Attentive to each need and honest claim;
Prompt to their griefs the ready ear to lend,
And only stern when justice was the aim.

These toilers lived in innocence of guile,
Unknowing, fearing not oppressive power;
The prized reward was an approving smile,
If toil compelled, or pleasure ruled the hour.

Tradition points, and fancy's pencil paints
  The moonlit evening and the emerald lawn,
As, mindful of the few and light restraints,
  They dance, with gestures free as forest fawn.

And master, mistress and the mansion guest,
  Have pleasant smiles and words for each and all,
Till heedful cares proclaim the hour for rest,
  And hush for silent night the lawn and hall.

The Coming War Struggle. Battle of Bunker Hill.

Sweet dream of peace, contentment and repose!
  Why break the charm? why rend the silver cord?
Alas! 'tis fate;—our briefest days are those
  Which wing our hopes, which measure our reward.

More dear, O Washington! to thee more fair
  Thy rich domain than other lands of Earth;
For all thy joy is centered in the care
  Of home companions by thine ample hearth.

As morning skies are oft too bright to last,
  So now on thy horizon dark appears
A storm of war, whose desolating blast
  Shall end thy peace, and shade thy coming years.

Long have the people to oppression bowed,
And purchased for their homes inglorious joy;
Stung to resistance now, they cry aloud
That God shall rule and tyranny destroy.

The insolent encroachments of the king,
Hope born of thought in faith's approving hour,
Fire the free souls, and they indignant fling
Back to the throne defiance of its power.

Brave men can die, but they will not be slaves!
Is the fierce language of each patriot's eye;—
Sternly they meet around the bloody graves,
And "Lexington and vengeance!" is their cry.

That martyr blood poured out upon the sod—
Each drop more precious than the rarest gem
In England's crown—the master-hand of God
Shall set in freedom's priceless diadem.

O! it is glorious to behold the rage
Of those whom ravage to resistance drives;
O! it is joy to write on country's page
The roll of honor and the gift of lives.

From vale and hill-top sounds the call: "To arms!"
The echoes ring, and fife and clarion horn,
And clamorous drum-beat send the wild alarms
Afar this battle-pregnant April morn!

The wrathful yeoman for a moment stays
To wipe the sweat-drops from his frowning brow;
Stern Putnam hears, and with his eyes ablaze
With passion, in the furrow leaves his plough.

Again he grasps his ancient battle-blade,
Mounts the old farm-horse, and, with words of ban,
Spurs off, away, in homespun garb arrayed,
To urge the war and lead the army van.

Old Stark, afar in his New Hampshire town,
Listens the call, and vaults upon his steed,
And, like a vengeful thunderbolt, comes down
To fight for country in the hour of need.

From farm, and forge, and many a hamlet home,
From menaced lands, or regions far away,
Fathers and sturdy sons together come,
To strike for God in war's red battle day.

Prescott, renowned for valiant arm is there,
Whose deeds are told in many a soldier song;
Knowlton, and Ward, and Gridley, swift to dare
The foremost place and urge the charge along.

Warren, aflame for liberty adored,
And hundreds more who feel the glory thrill,
Poise the long firelock, point the flashing sword,
And wreak the wrath of Heaven from Bunker Hill.

That height is freedom's altar! Lo! the flame,
The smoke as incense rising to the sky;
There the brave patriots their decree proclaim,
And hear, unmoved, war's awful voice reply.

The foes advance in haste, with bated breath,
Against that earthwork yesterday unknown;—
Thrice march the serried soldier ranks to death;
Twice they recoil, o'erwhelmed and overthrown.

They swarm upon the height, but at the cost
Of shattered files, the mangled and the slain;
Honor they save; but ancient prestige lost,
Gives to the patriot cause unmeasured gain.

England shall mourn that fearful sacrifice,
Where Freedom fell to live, where Warren died;
Her vain regret shall pay the heavy price
For wrong inflicted and for right denied.

Unwisely cast, the boomerang may turn
And pierce the dusky warrior where he stands;
War-flames, if lighted heedlessly, may burn,
Subdued alone by desolated lands.

Freedom, assailed, o'erthrown, shall lift her head
Again, and still again in ceaseless birth;
As verdure, from the ashes of the dead,
Springs forth anew to beautify the Earth.

The Declaration of Independence.

To inmost depth the public soul is stirred;
The chieftains listen, like wild steeds restrained,
The utterance of that spirit-thrilling word
Conceived in justice and of Heaven ordained.

What grasp can give full freedom to the pen,
What pencil-tint the glorious light recall
Which glows upon the brows of those grave men
In Congress met, in Independence Hall?

O Liberty! how excellent art thou!
The highest good in human destinies;
How grand are they who at thy altar vow
To live for thee, or die thy votaries!

Momentous issues hang upon the hour;
They question fortune; they demand of fate
Revealment of the future; pray for power
To break the thraldom, unify the State.

What shall the verdict of the Congress be?
Will they be true in this soul-trying time?
And, rising to the height of majesty,
Will they pronounce the shiboleth sublime?

"*Ring! Grandsire, ring!*"—O! broken is the spell!
Light, O ye people! all your altar flames!
"*Ring! Grandsire, ring!*" and Independence bell
To wondering nations Liberty proclaims!

Rend the old garb of withered Eden leaves,
And cast the fragments to the vagrant wind;
Henceforth the warp and weft that freedom weaves
Shall form a robe of honor for mankind.

Washington appointed Commander of the American Army.

The land is up! What chief shall draw the sword,
To point the battle grounds, nor lay it down,
Until the rights of man shall be restored,
And honor shall decree a triumph crown?

The people rise! Who shall their leader be,
Of fearless soul, like Sparta's hero king?
Who consecrate the new Thermopylæ
For bud and bloom of fame's eternal Spring?

He comes! Virginia sends her grandest son,
By wise men chosen, best of all the brave,
Who shall proclaim, by deeds heroic done,
That faith, with valor joined, shall country save.

O Washington! how wide, how vast thy field!
And worthy as the classic land of Greece;—
Thou new Leonidas! behind thy shield
Shall march the new-born nation unto peace.

Thine, Cambridge, first the honor to behold
The sword unsheathed which caught the morning beam,
Which history shall portray, on page unrolled,
Till time shall end and break Earth's fever-dream.

—

First Mutterings of the War-Storm.

Rebellion, lift thy head, the die is cast!
Patriots! united, consecrate, arise!
'Tis revolution now! The stream is passed;
Beyond your Rubicon an empire lies!

Wrong, or redemption; honor's bloom, or blight;
Freedom, or bondage with a heavier chain;
These are the issues;—Heaven, defend the right,
Or all thy promises are vague and vain.

List the glad omen! Hark! the patriots hail
Their glorious chief with loud and long acclaim;
Order and discipline at once prevail,
Evoked from chaos by his magic name.

The foes are many and the task is hard;
But they who, armed for justice, strike their blow,
Are servants of the Lord, and He will guard
Against their failure and their overthrow.

Son of America! of wisdom taught,
  Thou art the fittest, in these solemn hours,
To lead our armies, guide the public thought,
  While horrors threaten as the darkness lowers.

Patriots are they, but soldiers how unlike,
  That spring to arms and to thy standard flock;
But they are men who think as well as strike,
  And strike to kill or conquer in the shock.

Relief of Boston.

Boston in chains! low at her conqueror's feet!
  How throbs the public pulse with anger thrill!
Ride! horsemen; ride! spur your strong coursers fleet,
  And cry the call for war from every hill.

Father! arise, and, with your gallant son,
  The rude, wild lesson of the conflict learn;
Mother! prepare when battle days are done,
  To mourn their loss, or greet their home return.

Far as the States in league extend their bounds,
  The call is heard and every cord is tense;
The clamor rises, and the shout resounds
  Which summons all for State and home defence.

O grand! when men who bondage long have known,
Arm for full freedom,—not ignoble mean;
These are not hirelings of the British throne,
Arrayed for war, encamped on Cambridge Green.

East, north and west the patriot host is spread;
And the shrill fife and clamorous drum are heard,
While, marking time, they halt with firmer tread,
And wait to charge, impatient for the word.

Close draw, and closer yet the lines; advance,
Like tide encroaching on a narrowing bound;
Your wary chieftain's eyes, with lightning glance,
Shall mark for you each point of vantage ground.

O grand! O rare! an army well equipped
For war, with ships in harbor filled with arms,
Pent up, beleaguered! fighting not, yet whipped
By the brave toilers of the shops and farms.

Up anchors! turn your keels and sail away,
Ye ruthless bands whose trade is to destroy;
Let your shamed leader veil his face to-day,
While Boston bells ring canticles of joy.

Now let glad anthems rise, the cannons roar:
New England rends the shackle-chain of slaves;
She spurns the foemen from her ocean shore,
And bids her tempests drive them o'er the waves.

But pause not here; a greater work remains
  Than this, so glorious and so wisely done;
Thy mission is to break all British chains
  That bind thy struggling country, Washington.

War of the Revolution.

Statesmen and leaders, met in congress grave,
  The chances weigh:—shall Freedom live or fall?
They summon patriot heroes, and the brave
  Arise, and arm, and rally to the call.

Behold! how wondrous, how sublime the view!
  Vast States unite for war and dare the strife!
Propitious Heaven decrees an epoch new;
  A nation born is throbbing into life.

Men who love liberty, of other lands, declare
  That all have equal rights and should be free;
And chiefs renowned unto our shores repair
  From realms beyond the vast and mighty sea.

From Poland, German lands, from gallant France,
  They come, with proffers of their arms and aid,
The cause, of causes greatest, to advance,
  Of liberty, so dear, so oft betrayed.

Honor to thee! nor shall the world forget,
Nor freemen fail to own thy priceless worth,
To prize thee, love thee, generous Lafayette,
While glory writes the records of the Earth.

Dear to the heart of Washington, whose arm
Enfolds and straining draws thee to his breast;
Around thy memory faith shall weave her charm,
A nation hold thee aye its honored guest.

Steuben, illustrious in thy native land,
Immortal in this favored realm of ours,
If thought of mine fit measure could command,
How should my pen portray thy varied powers?

Strong arm of Washington! his anxious soul
Hath need of thee in time of sore dismay;
Backward thy genius shall the shadow roll,
And light reveal, the dawn of coming day.

Honor to thee! O Kosciusko! thou
Didst dream of glorious deeds in boyhood days;
The world shall place a chaplet on thy brow
That well may claim ambition's purest bays.

Thy country weighted with a heavy woe,
Fierce feuds intestine, noble hearts that break,
And every nearer nation for a foe,
Well mayst thou wear the cypress for her sake.

And ye, all men, whate'er your lot or race,
  Who to America devotion bring,
Fame shall accord ye worthy page and place,
  And history's muse shall write your offering.

The world is tired of ravage and of wrong,
  The fetters that humility has worn;
Manhood, arise! chant your immortal song,
  And point your banner high and bravely borne.

Thine is the honor, O my country! thine,
  To be the battle-ground of Liberty;
Strong be thine arm; may Providence benign
  With love sustain, with light encompass thee.

The foe is mighty—she whose flag unfurled
  Waves ever in the sunlight and the gale;
Whose warrior chiefs are known of all the world,
  Where armies march, or war's great navies sail.

And art thou wary? Dost thou measure well
  The task, O hero? Hast thou Argus eyes?
For only tireless zeal can break the spell,
  And wisdom mark the dangers that shall rise.

Thy voice must summon armies; thou must lead
  In swift advance, or plan the wise retreat;
And thou the starving soldier's wants must plead:
  His rags, his wretchedness, his unshod feet.

On the long shores where break Atlantic waves,
And where vast rivers to the sea descend,
Or where in forests lurk the Indian braves,
Thy prescience must provide, thine arm defend.

Toil thou must bear with patience; jealous tongue
Reproachful word and bitter taunt shall dare,
Darkness encompass deepest wilds among,
And even one, thy bosom friend, despair.

Treason shall raise its foul and serpent fang,
To sting thee in thy lonely, rugged path;
Thou must endure emotion's sharpest pang,
While justice vindicates thy righteous wrath.

One whom thy pleading mercy would forgive,
A noble youth, of generous estate,
Must die a felon's death; and he shall live
Who lured the victim onward to his fate.

'Tis just!—crown Andrè with the martyr wreath
That bleached upon the pallid brow of Hale,
Who gave to country all he could bequeath:
The moral grandeur of his dying wail.

Arnold! than Ephiates far more base,—
Tongues are polluted when thy name they speak;
Thy history shall the crime almost efface:
The treachery of the foul and recreant Greek.

Slowly shall turn the lagging wheel of time,
And years elapse before thy work be done;
And art thou equal to the task sublime?
And hast thou Atlas shoulders, Washington?

Armies and fleets shall menace; chiefs have sway,
With pomp and state of almost regal power;—
Trained in the school of arms, stern soldiers they,
Of England's potency the prop and flower.

Brunswick and Hesse their devoted bands
Shall hither send, exulting in the chance,
And sell for slaughter. Chiefs of German lands,
How foul ye are compared with princely France!

Your subjects sold, to foreign shambles brought,
For British gold to gild your sham of state!
O brutes! for ye not one forgiving thought,—
Only the vicious luxury of hate!

Can history point a sadder, gloomier sight,
Or pencil paint, from regions of despair,
A scene to match that dark and dismal night,
With all thy frozen horrors, Delaware?

Look! gentle pity, own the sorrow thrill,
As prison ships their hideous dead disgorge;
Mute feeling, shrink, with sympathetic chill,
Before the winter blasts of Valley Forge!

O country! blush that in the hour of pain,
When sad events disasters dire forebode.
The great commander often pleads in vain
For soldiers weary who must bear thy load.

Think of those unshod feet whose tracks, with blood
Ensanguine wastes of sheeted hail and snow,
Braving the stone-bound path, the ice-cold flood,
In swift retreat before a pampered foe.

And dost thou, Congress, listen the alarm,
The call where even heroes seem dismayed?
Shame that ye strengthen not the laboring arm;
Shame that dull tongues should counsel tardy aid.

Thou, war-worn chief, the bulwark of the State,
Must feel thy soul with grief and anger burn;
And thou must bear the insolence of fate,
O hero! till thy tide to fortune turn.

With armies wasting like the April snow,
Scarce fed, scarce clad, defeated and forlorn,
Thou must, in thy dark hours, their sorrows know,
Brave watchman, faithful, waiting for the morn.

But Heaven the chart of fortune shall unroll;
Already dawnlight greets thine anxious eyes;—
Be stedfast, chieftain; all thy doubts control;
Through vista shades the path of promise lies.

And morning comes! Behold! on eastern sky,
Mirage of squadrons to the conflict pressed;
A champion hears the throttled people's cry,
And Gaul shall meet the Briton in the West.

Thou glorious France! impulsive, generous, just,
True to the vow of ancient chivalry,
Thy hand shall raise a sister from the dust,
And write thy name in light of liberty.

Yet aid comes not before the tests of skill,
The brave advances, battles ordered well,
Have proved thee, Washington, of peerless will,
Strong to endure, and triumph to compel.

And thus the years move on—the lagging years,—
Slow-lingering comes the dawn of peaceful days,
As though meek fortune were beset by fears,
And fate were looking on with careless gaze.

But not in vain the change so slowly wrought:
Faith weaves her halo on thy noble brow;
Less tense and strained its lines of anxious thought,
Thy patriots, tried, are dauntless heroes now.

Defection, doubt, dismay are overthrown;
Bending with joy to thy supreme command,
The chiefs, accordant all, thy glory own,
And circle round thee, guardians of the land.

Near and afar the din of war resounds,
And deeds of gallant bravery are done;
The foes, retreating still to narrowing bounds,
No longer boast of battles fought and won.

The sun of triumph with refulgent rays
Dissolves the anger clouds that frowned in vain;
Eutaw and Yorktown close the battle days,
And Britain here ends her inglorious reign.

WASHINGTON RESIGNS COMMAND OF THE ARMY.

Again your peals, ye merry Boston bells!
Smile in your graves at Lexington, ye dead!
Mother to cooing babe the story tells,
And priests in prayers the joyful tidings spread.

Ye nations of the East, with histories old,
Turn to the West your eyes,—in light impearled,
A bannered realm of new-born States behold,
Whose rising stars shall glorify the world.

Who, living in the harvest time of grace,
When a brave people's hopes high promise wear,
Has failed to note the glow on every face,
Like sunshine of the soul effulgent there?

The tempest rage of passion passing by,
  Leaves the mild semblance of serener day;
So pure the zenith air, the azure sky,
  So sink the distant clouds and pass away.

To thee, O Washington! a hymn to thee,
  A song of victory, a pæan grand!
But ah! the harp-strings fail of melody,
  Or murmur to the unaccustomed hand.

Great is the man who sword for country draws,
  To sheathe it not till triumph shall be won;
But greater he, obedient to the laws,
  Who lays it down when duty all is done.

Full many a chieftain, from victorious field
  Returning, flushed with pride, in war array,
Has stormed the gates of Rome behind his shield,
  And forced the Roman senate to obey.

Thou, having power scarce measured or defined,
  Didst lay thine armor at thy country's feet,
And pass, with benedictions of mankind,
  To calm contentment in thy loved retreat.

O! happy he who, weary, putteth by
  A load borne long, to holy purpose true;
For him the meed: "Well done!" a triumph high,
  More grand than Roman victor ever knew.

FORMATION OF THE FEDERAL UNION.

Rest! 'tis not lying down to sleep and dream.
Or in oblivion lose the thread of time:
Peace! 'tis not sailing on a waveless stream,
Where spicy winds blow soft from fragrant clime.

Peace! rest! while work remaineth to be done,—
The full fruition promised to receive!
As well bid pause the coursers of the sun,—
As well the ocean billows cease to heave.

The States redeemed, once shackled and enslaved,
Thrilled into freedom and an untried life,
By wisdom must from anarchy be saved,
And all the woes of internecine strife.

If grave the peril of the great campaign
Whence they have borne aloft the victor's palm,
Not less important now the end to gain:
To soothe the public pulse to peace and calm.

Disjointed, free;—each, as a sovereign power,
Claims independent signature and seal;
But all are wise in the momentous hour,
And form a compact for the common weal.

United, strong;—what man the choice shall be,
To give due weight and warrant to the laws?
What chief the new Lycurgus? Who but he
That bore the brunt of war and won their cause?

As the staunch bark, when troubled ocean raves,
And clouds tempestuous sweep athwart the sky,
Lifts her broad prow majestic o'er the waves
Which sweep in fury impotently by,

So thou, when dangers threaten to o'erwhelm,
Dost rise victorious o'er the troubled scene:
A new Columbus, master of the helm,
To guide to fairer realms and seas serene.

Mount Vernon. By the Tomb of Washington.

Mount Vernon! beautiful in age, we fling
Our garlands, fancy-woven, over thee;
Pensive, serene, O grateful pilgrim! bring
Thy offerings to this Shrine of Liberty!

With thoughts like rhythmic waves on moonlit seas,
And reverent footsteps tread this holy ground,
Where, shaded by these ancient upland trees,
A hero's ashes rest in sleep profound.

Come hither, ye who walk the world's great stage
With stride pretentious—folly's fancy brood;
Here muse life's deeper lesson, O ye sage!
And ye the pets of fortune's generous mood.

Nor deem the measure of the grace denied,
  Ye lowlier reckoned by presumptuous test;
His memory is your heritage; your pride
  Should hold his grandeur as a rich bequest.

Meet place were this for honor's wreath to bloom
  For those who crowns hereditary wear:
To kneel in reverence by the simple tomb,
  To crave a blessing and receive it there.

For he whose mortal is encoffined here,
  Arose to height above imperial state;
He sought the simpler course of life to steer;
  He rode the tide of fame supremely great.

Imbued with sterling pride, with nicest sense
  Of others' due, he only claimed his right;
He worshiped God and Liberty,—and hence
  We read his history in empyreal light.

Led on by fortune toward Earth's grandest crown,
  By wildering paths to mortals seldom shown,
He reached the zenith glory of renown
  And triumph, and refused an offered throne.

How like his soul! how like a hero's dream,
  The scene sublime, when the war-chiefs arose
And prayed him to accept the meed supreme,
  And he rebuked them as their country's foes.

Revered, eternal gratitude be thine,
For hope exulting, for a land redeemed;
Stoop from thy heaven, the realm of grace benign,
And see what soul prophetic never dreamed:

States, bound by cord indissolubly strong,
Yet seeming frail and weak as silken strand,
Extending from far northern hills along
To rich savannahs in the sunnier land;

From where Atlantic's fitful seas assail
The high, resounding cliffs with sullen roar,
To where Pacific, fanned by gentler gale,
Lifts the long, curving billows to the shore.

And thou canst find pure souls, and homes beloved
Far leagues beyond the ancient boundaries;
At altars kneel where late the bison roved,
And list the grand cathedral litanies.

Apotheosis.

Hero immortal! who, the bards among,
Shall, with fit eulogy, the theme prolong?
To worthiest harp the triumph should be sung,
Thy grand career the minstrel's thought and song.

If to thy honor were a shaft to rise,
Of classic grace, beseeming thy renown,
The marble should invade admiring skies,
And wear eternal sunlight on its crown.

Leader of men! in every mood sublime!
Thy wisdom taught them to be truly free;
And thus thy life adown the stream of time
Passed on, like tranquil river to the sea.

"'Tis well!"—thy latest words when leaving Earth;
For death alone could give thee greater gain;
And wise men deem thee, when they measure worth,
One of the few that have not lived in vain.

—

Beloved! revered! what time the orb of day
Shall cease to circle Earth with path of flame,
When stars shall leave the sky and pass away,
And Heaven's historian read the roll of fame,

The Angel of the Trump, on pinions spread,
Shall to the worlds proclaim the great award:
A crown of light auroral for thy head,
Gemmed with the brightest jewels of the Lord!

Mount Vernon! Washington! Once more I press,
With fancy's feet, the lawns he loved so well;
Again I turn the sacred dust to bless,
And list the requiem of the passing-bell!

—

Soft be the bed whereon a patriot lies!
His memory rich whose name to honor moves!
Serenely sleep ye who have won the prize!
Ye rest in virtue whom the Lord approves!

DRINK TO THE BRAVE.

Written for a Birthday Banquet tendered Gen. Sheridan by the Loyal Legion of Chicago, March, 1888.

—

Drink to the brave! and let the wine
Be choicest of the generous vine
Which, grown on high and sunny hills,
The sparkling dew of heaven distils.
The muse a laurel wreath shall bring,
And crown him with her offering,
While gladdened eyes the features scan
Of our beloved Sheridan.

Drink to the brave! and as ye pour
The nectar flood, let thought restore
The battle days, the scenes afar,
Where to the zenith flashed his star.
Honor shall scan the roll of fame,
And find thereon no dearer name
Than his, who led the loyal van,
Our own illustrious Sheridan.

Drink to the brave! As swiftly run
The years that drop us, one by one,
Still on our hero's natal day,
Let each survivor homage pay,
Until the last shall drink alone,
And feebly murmur, with his moan,
The ancient toast, as best he can:
"My brave commander, Sheridan!"

Humorous Poems.

THE JESUIT'S DREAM.

There are certain good persons, of piety's school,
  Who regard it a happy vocation,
To go forth unto places where none but the cool
  Stand the ghost of a chance for salvation:—

To the polls, or to Congress; to court or to camp;
  Or to regions forbidden, unlawful;
Unto wild Indian tribes, where the best is a scamp,
  And the worst is peculiarly awful.

They will stand a cremation, slow torture of law,
  Or of politics,—anything fearful;
Sleep with perfect content on a bundle of straw,
  And with nothing for breakfast be cheerful.

They will go to high feast that digestion disturbs,
  Like the innocent lambs to the slaughter,
When the stomach demands a plain dinner of herbs,
  And potation of simple spring water.

They will sing, at the stake, joyous anthems of praise,
  While flames their poor bodies are wreathing;
Bear the pain without flinching; delight in the blaze,
  To tormentors their blessings bequeathing.

I could never admire their vocation, their luck,
And their hearty contempt for the dollars;
But I freely confess that I covet their pluck,
And their high reputation as scholars.

I could not, with calm nerve, and of fear not a trace,
Seek the haunts of wild imps of perdition;
I would sooner permit the whole pestilent race
Of man-eaters to go to——ignition.

These remarks serve my purpose to introduce one
Who, not quite content with a burning,
Had escaped from the stake, after being half done,
And, repentent, was thither returning.

His name, at this moment, I cannot recall;—
Names always my memory bother;—
Here's a list—take your choice—take one or take all;
It was something commencing with "Father."

Father Boyle, Father Blake, Father Boyd, Father Burke,
Father Brine, Father Breen, Father Newman;—
Sure a man can be father, without being Turk,
To a very large family human.

Father Clay, Father Coyle, Father Craig, Father Glynn,
Father Callighan, Father O'Blarney,
Father Clare, Father Clear, Father Duff, Father Flynn,
And a few from Kildare and Killarney.

This list must comprise all the men that I know
Of that very fine body of clerics,

Who, meekly obeying commandment, will go
  Where a pirate would have the hysterics.

My friend, introduced in a stanza above,
  With a somewhat unusual mention,
Was a Jesuit, bound on a mission of love,
  Back to those who required his attention.

His hurts were all healed, save a gash and a stab,
  And a very large surface of blister;
And the bridge of his nose was arrayed in a scab,
  From the scratch of a vicious young sister.

He was journeying onward, devouring a leek—
  For with cattle and fishes he boarded,
When a tempest approaching compelled him to seek
  A safe shelter by forest afforded.

Where the low, trailing tangle lay rotting and dank,
  He could not make a pleasing selection;
But there lay a large hollow log high on a bank,
  And he into it crawled for protection.

Such a chamber as this only those can endure,
  Who are used to a kick or a buffet;
But he found it a lodging-place dry and secure,
  And he was contented to "rough-it."

With his hat for a pillow he courted a snooze,
  For he was a-faint and a-weary;
And soon, in a sort of ambrosial booze,
  He was dreaming of things bright and cheery.

At commencement his dream was not happily chaste,
  For he thought that a centipede stung him;

That again to the stake he was summoned in haste.
That a convert had saved and then hung him;

That a chief with a tomahawk menaced his head;
That a young Indian maiden caressed him;
[Each a terrible strait for a priest, it is said;]
And also a nightmare oppressed him.

Such the torture of soul in the earlier doze,
When the flesh was too palpably present;
But the body soon sank into deeper repose,
And he dreamed of things cheerful and pleasant:

Of his chapel afar in the wilderness rude,
The dear scene of his choice and his labors;
Of parishioners rather too prone to intrude,
And to act as disorderly neighbors;

Of their late very sad, disagreeable act,
While he only was trying to save them:
But he thought of their lack of high polish and tact,
And he gladly and fully forgave them.

Then at times he would feel an unusual twinge
In his ears, as a warrior would tear them
Away from their tough cartilaginous hinge,
And as handsome war trophies would wear them.

But he deemed that through lack of a pastime more mild,
As enjoyment to this he was driven;
That at worst he was only a frolicsome child,
And the savage was sweetly forgiven.

And he laughed in his dream, in a low, quiet way,
At an incident—merely a trifle:
The great chief, who was ruefully learning to pray,
Knocked him down with the stock of his rifle.

His mirth was called forth, as he lay in the dust,
By the aspect the Indian presented,
Who strode haughtily off, venting rage and disgust,
For the tonsure a scalping prevented.

Thus the vision extended through many a year
Of endeavors that seemed not to languish;
For the star of high faith never failed to appear
When his body was writhing with anguish.

Then he dreamed that his labors were happily done;
That he gathered his converts about him,
Led them up toward the fair pearly gate, every one,
For how could they find it without him?

They conducted the march with decorum, their best,
With a scalp-covered pole for a banner;
Their enjoyment and rapture they freely expressed
By their usual method and manner.

The great sagamore, feathered from top-knot to heel,
Sometimes, with emotion ecstatic,
Would perform the war-dance, [sort of wild Indian reel],
And a scalping-scene, highly dramatic.

Every brave was war-painted, black, yellow and red,
With as aspect to daunt a beholder;

And his scalplock was haughtily topping his head,
Like a fighting-man's chip on the shoulder.

That the medicine-man with good glory was full,
Is a fact you may bet both your eyes on,
For his head was adorned with the horns of a bull,
And his rear with the tail of a bison.

Every one, that no comfort his sainthood might lack,
By Pope's good "faithful dog" was attended,
Whose delight was to skirmish for fleas on the back,
At the joint where the tail is suspended.

Younger bucks roamed at will, disregarding restraints,
All conducting themselves rather queerly,
By tormenting white pilgrims, and lassoing saints
That were trying to love them sincerely.

To the lodge-poles papooses and bundles were strapped,
And the lean, toiling ponies conveyed them;—
All the matrons and maids in red blankets were wrapped,
But the boys were as nature arrayed them.

Ancient squaws bore utensils and goods on their backs:—
Straw and peltry for comfort while sleeping,
Pots, porringers, frying-pans, jerked-beef in packs,—
Things essential in forest housekeeping.

Through the ranks, toned to gladness, the loud whoopings rang,
For they all were as cheery as crickets:—

Poor Saint Peter, amazed, and afraid of the gang,
Passed them in without stopping for tickets.

In the vast golden court they performed the corn-dance,
With such graceful precision of motion,
That the Shaker saints near them proceeded to prance,
In their usual style of devotion.

The good priest, feeling scandalized, ventured to chide
Their wild joy, or at least such expression;
But they seized him and bore him, a lodge-pole astride,
At the head of their jumping procession.

And they danced, and they yelled with high rapture and vim,
Raised a row with such vigor of leaven,
That it soon became evident, even to him,
That the tribe had possession of heaven.

Near the gate he beheld, in his troubled repose,
The great sagamore scalping Saint Peter;
Then the dream was dispelled by an ant in his nose,
And his rest became calmer and sweeter.

THE CANDIDATE AND THE JESUIT.

—

The river of politics winds through a maze
  Which at best has a hard reputation;
And full many a bark has been lost in the haze
  Which attends its unsafe navigation.

An old yacht, badly ballasted, stranded one day,
  In a wildly-tempestuous rumpus,
Where the river was threading its sinuous way,
  And ashore waded Candidate Bumpus.

Here, a-weary and wet, he sat down on a log
  In whose hollow a wanderer slumbered;
His political bark lay, a wreck, on a bog,
  And his soul with despair was encumbered.

He had stemmed the false tide of the river in vain,
  Through a very exciting election;
And the long costly toil, with its hard mental strain,
  Was a theme for much dismal reflection.

Unaware that of listeners the place was not clear,
  His remarks rang out loudly and clearly,
In anathemas, curses, wild, strong, and severe,
  For he ached for an office severely.

—

Ave, sanctissima!
Pulchra purissima!
Mater sed vobis;
Mater non nobis.

The candidate turned, with a glance of dismay;
I may also remark with a stare of surprise:—
By his side sat a priest! just as plain as the day
To a very plain man with the plainest of eyes.

"Fair sir," said the candidate, not as one vexed,—
But like one for a moment with wonder perplexed;
Or a preacher, young, nervous, away from his text.

"Fair sir, it would seem, by the cut of your jib,
By the cord round your waist, and your collar, or bib,
Your remark, in a tongue not vernacular, glib;

The peculiarly horrible hat that you wear,
The very particular cut of your hair,
And your physical make-up, uncommonly spare;

By your very serene, intellectual face,
That you are a pleader retained in the case
Of defunct old-man Adam's degenerate race.

You could not have advanced unaccountably slow,
For I'm sure that about half a second ago,—
At the longest not more than a moment or so,—

This old log of your physical weight was as free,
As the very rough bark of a very dead tree
In a very exposed situation could be.

To determine how this queer result came about,
Where you live, as a general thing, or hang out,
I must beg, as the matter is clouded by doubt,

That you kindly accord me a view of your shanks,
Which can play such unheard-of, remarkable pranks,
And a glance at your rear elevation,—ah! thanks.

Thus the doubt can be solved now adrift in my mind,

Giving rise to conjecture the queerest, I find,—
That is: if you'll be so confidingly kind.

It is said that an eminent gentleman—game
To the backbone, or common conclusions are lame—
If you happen, in speaking, to mention his name,

Any hour of the day, any day in the year,
Be he distant in——[hem], or conveniently near,
Will instantly, palpably, plainly appear.

Have no fear for my nerve; it can stand any shock,
And my brain is as hard as the heart of a rock;—
So proceed, if you please, to unbutton your frock."

The good priest, momentarily somewhat confused,
Like a person in doubt whether praised or abused,
Replied, with a shrug as though rather amused:

"My beloved——[the candidate blushed and looked
down],
I beseech you feel not so uneasy and brown;
I am neither a tramp taking toll of the town,

Nor the being alluded to:—person in black,
With a swinging continuance hung at the back,
And a foot that displays a hiatus, or crack.

I am just what I seem: a poor priest of the Lord;
Behold here my rosary, crucifix, cord,—
Three things by the world, flesh and devil abhorred.

My home is the chapel; my only desire
Is to rescue the heathen, now sunk in the mire,
And to light in their souls the beneficent fire.

My food is the product of valleys and hills;
My drink is the nectar that flows in the rills,
Which nature for all men so freely distils.

All my riches I carry in wallet and scrip;
And the Devil will flee when my fingers I flip.
Thus"— [*Makes the sign of the Cross*].
"If that is the case," said the candidate, "grip.
Thus"— [*Seizes the priest's hand*].

They shook to the east and they shook to the west,
Shood hands near the forehead and down by the vest,
Until nature demanded cessation and rest.

Why people clasp hands when they socially greet
An acquaintance in house or abroad in the street,
Is a question which only conjecture can meet.

It was well enough once, when a man in the right,
Or the wrong, upon small provocation would fight,
Who always went ready to slaughter on sight.

Hence the custom, when one not desiring a fuss,
Met another not ready to stir up a muss,—
And the habit, unchanged, has descended to us.

This must sometime become more like labor than play
To the President, when from the White House away,
And a crowd miscellaneous homage would pay.

One has fingers as cold as the neck of a clam;
Another a hand that is shaped like a ham;
Some have palms that are rough like the horn of a ram.

Wiggles one as though guiding a cow by the tail;
One pulls as though pumping her milk in a pail,
And another like pounding out grain with a flail.

Madam grasps as though trying a pippin to pare;

Miss weakly, as having no vigor to spare;
Old-man Stubb with a grip like grab of a bear.

More delightful the method when Chinamen thrown
Together, politely their friendship make known:
All clasping their hands and each shaking his own.

There are places, I grant, where to practice the game
Were the best for awhile, until passions grow tame,
And men less predisposed their opponents to maim.

In Wall Street, for instance, where bull, on the sly,
The bear will salute by assaulting his eye;—
If the cock-pit is better the newspapers lie.

In the Capitol hall,—the great workshop of jaw,—
Or the scarcely more orderly courts of the law,
It were well, for a while, to continue to draw

The hand from the hip, and expose it to view,
To show that, in drawing, no weapon one drew,
And then prove by a grip the eye-evidence true.

I beseech you to pardon me, reader, my friend,
For digressing,—a fault I shall presently mend,
And continue my narrative straight to the end.

Stray thoughts will at times get enmeshed in my mind,
Like kittens, to frolic and mischief inclined,
In the yarn which the mistress is trying to wind;

And I cannot proceed with my orderly train
Of ideas, and all their fine bearings explain,
Till I stop to unsnarl, disentangle the skein.

We left the old candidate, cured of his whim,
Or his fear, with companion—a strange one for him,

And his thinking machinery ship-shape and trim.

"My good brother," said he, "your contempt for the laws
Which fetter dull spirits, your excellent cause,
Demand, and I give them my hearty applause.
Thus—[*Claps his hands slowly and lightly.*]

If quite proper the place, will you please to expound
Unto me your belief, your desire and its bound?
They will win, I feel confident, honor profound."

"I believe," said the priest, "in the Father, the Son,
Spirit, Mary the mother, immaculate one,
The good patron of all who their duty have done.

There are various things in our excellent creed;
One is this: if to Mary we turn in our need,
For assistance, she then will for us intercede.

Said the candidate: "By your account it appears
That the Mother must have very sensitive ears,
And be also a judge of the articles—tears.

My vocation, (pray pardon its mention), the law,
Has taught me to look in his case for a flaw,
Who tears in all places convenient will draw.

Now of those which are shed by humanity's eyes,
Which the angels on hand carry up to the skies,
(Pray excuse me)—I think the Madonna's surmise

Must be that at least about ninety per cent.
Are expended with only the baser intent—
The remainder by those who do sometimes repent.

I am not, you may think, quite a competent judge;
Perhaps not. You perceive that with elbow I nudge;
Thus— [*Nudges the priest, heavily*],

As expressing (pray pardon vulgarity) fudge!

Let the argument close. My remarks must be tame.
Those matters your thoughts and your piety claim.
May I ask whither go you, and what is your aim?"

"I return to the place whence I recently fled,
Through the fear of more torture of body and head.
I was weak; for the same many tears have I shed."

Quoth the candidate: "Sir, do you say that you go,
And with willingness, back to a torturing foe?"
Said the priest, with an aspect seraphic: "Just so."

"My friend," said the candidate, "mark me—I stare
Thus;— [*Staring impressively*],
This denotes that before I would have them in care,
I would let them go——
Thus.— [*Points downward with two gestures*],
Sir, I decline to say where."

"Nay—nay;" said the other; "speak not with such haste,
Nor in words of reproach your fine energy waste.
In employments like ours every man to his taste."

"The remark, my good friend, you so carefully quote,
I was forced," said the candidate, "lately to note,
When my followers shamefully scanted my vote.

Look sharply;—perhaps you perceive that I wink
Thus.— [*Winks elaborately*].
It is not the effect of the wine that I drink,
But an effort to show what I really think.

The plain food that you gather from woodlands and streams,
No doubt to you rich and luxurious seems,

And produces in slumber the pleasantest dreams.

For my morning repast, when from slumber I wake,
I have coffee, hot waffles, fresh butter and steak;
I prefer, for my dinner a roast or a bake.

You have neighbors, I deem, whom you constantly
bless;
Who endeavor, with gifts, their regard to express,
When they come to your chapel to pray, or confess."

The poor priest, at these words, heaved a sigh of
dismay,
For the picture called up bore his thoughts far away,
And he silently knelt for a moment to pray.

Then with tears of relief he arose to regain
His seat on the log, when the truth was made plain,
That the act was accomplished with exquisite pain.

A low moan, yet so soft that it seemed like a sigh,
Escaped from his lips, and a tear in his eye
Gave evidence stronger than words could supply.

"I beseech you, kind Sir"—and his sad voice ap-
pealed
To the candidate's heart, "think it naught that's
revealed
Of my physical state, for my wounds are not healed."

"Your *what*, did you say?" "I refer to my wounds,
Where they burned me." "They burned you! the
infamous hounds!
And you back to them going! Why; hang it, man!
Zounds!

What stuff are you made of? Oh! mortal sedate,
Do my features express the fell passion of hate

Thus?— [*Deliberately assumes a look of ferocity*]
Please to scan them, for now I am truly irate."

"I am quite overwhelmed," said the priest, "with
despair,
By this weak revelation. A vow I declare
Of a shirt to my back, of stiff bristles and hair."

"I must also lament," the sad candidate said,
"But not for the cause that is bowing your head.
My regret is for you, who appear as one dead

To all pleasing sensations, the high but not chief
End of life, which give happiness, hope and relief,
When oppressed. Will you please make a note of
my grief?
I give vent to emotion by deepest of sighs,
Thus; —[*Breathing heavily*];
The custom, I think, is to turn up the eyes
Thus,— [*Rolling the eyeballs upward*],
To intimate feelings that will not arise.

I am far less accustomed to things of this sort,
Than to murders, thefts, forgeries, arsons—in short,
To tough criminal cases, or actions in tort.

Will you please to relate some particular acts
Of barbarity known—not yet stated as facts
By the newspaper men, or the usual tracts?"

"They are few, unimportant," he meekly replied.
"Our lives in the priesthood so peacefully glide,
That events seem but ripples upon the great tide

Which ever sets on toward the heavenly shore,
Which only the kind and the just shall explore,
Where the troubles of Earth shall annoy them no
more.

Our great mistress beloved—the good mother of all,
Holy Church, sends us forth to redeem from their thrall,
The poor children of Adam, accursed by his fall;

And we go with rejoicing to"——here I lament
The fact I must mention the truth to present
With precision—a trustworthy author's intent,—

That the candidate nodded,—his chin on his breast,
Like a turtle-fed alderman taking a rest,
His napkin discarded, unbuttoned his vest.

I can not with propriety say that he snored;
But he slept; and that fact he politely deplored,
For he said, when to wakefulness fully restored:

"My friend—on—your—mind the——suspi—sion—
may dawn———
That I now——have a—slight incli————nation
to————————yawn;
It is far from——polite. I resist.—It is gone.

If you can, for the time, with propriety due,
At the sermons switch off, I'll be thankful to you,
For I hear them in church, where I pay for my pew.

Some allusion you made to your physical plight,—
To wounds lately received, since regarded as slight;
It is matter on which I desire further light.

"They were nothing, great candidate: chances we
take,
Of some personal harm from knife, arrow, or stake,
Who attempt of barbarians angels to make.

It was weakness that forced me to flight in my need;
To impale me with lances was hardly fit meed;

But to pull out my toe-nails was torture indeed.

When they"—Here he stopped short; for the candidate stood
Before him, with marked and contemptuous mood,
Like a tramp while rejecting uneatable food.

"My thumb, Sir," said he, "at the point of my nose
I now place, Thus— [*Makes that gesture*]
as you see, for suspicion arose
In my mind by the mention you made of your toes.

I accept, without question, the torture by fire;
Such experience doleful had many a sire
Of the earlier times, or tradition's a liar.

But your toes! Make a note. I derisively cough;
Thus— [*Coughs with derision*]
It is all that politeness expresses of scoff."
Here the priest from one foot a bandage took off,

Five members revealing, late bleeding and raw.—
"*Who did it?*" roared out the old lion of law.
Said the priest, with a sigh of apology, "Squaw."

The old candidate bellowed: "My fingers I clench,
Thus— [*Closes fingers of left hand slowly*]
To denote that I'll try her, and hang the [hem] wench,
Thus— [*Makes upward gesture from left ear*]
Or I'll browbeat the jury and maltreat the bench.
Thus"— [*Strikes forward viciously*].

"Nay, friend," said the priest, with a hand on the arm
Of his wrathful companion, somewhat in alarm,
Which soothed the old hero at once like a charm;

"Nay, friend, judge them not in your anger, I pray;
They have virtues, I deem, which will yet come in play;
At the present they act in their natural way.

In the future, perhaps when my body shall be
Like a cloud passed, dissolved, or spent wave of the sea,
They will heed the sweet message: 'O come unto me!'"

The plant will spring up, for the seed has been sown,
The harvest will come and the meadows be mown.
Lo! their natures already have kindlier grown.—

They invite me, by gestures, my steps to retrace;
Sweet vision! Behold! they their teacher embrace;
Joy and love now illume each intelligent face.

The hands that once launched the fell shaft from the bow,
Now wield with dexterity shovel and hoe;
Fair cities arise, and vast industries grow.

List the chant in cathedral! Sublimely it swells!
Now it mournfully sinks to the cadence of knells
That are tolled by the slow-swinging musical bells.

Lo! a new State arises! No jealousy bars
Its advance and its growth,—a young sister of stars;
No cloud hovers o'er; no adversity mars

The completeness, the beauty. Now voters elect
A wise chief as their ruler; the base they reject,
As unworthy, unable to bless or protect.

Where once all were lawless, grave statesmen progress

In the making of laws which vast wisdom possess,
Whose number no mortal nor angel can guess.

The squaw that assailed my poor toes with her knife,
May become a fine lady,—perhaps be the wife
Of some eminent chief holding office for life.

The papoose that endeavored to make me a corse
With his little toy tomahawk, may, through remorse,
Become holy St. Young-man-afraid-of-his-horse.

The brave that assaulted my face like a beast,
May yet be a Congressman." Weeping, he ceased;
For that thought overwhelmed the sad soul of the priest.

The great candidate mused,—unto ecstacy rapt;
For the sketch so delightful his spirit entrapped;
Then remarked, as the priest on the shoulder he tapped:

"My friend and companion, behold me; I smile,
Thus— [*Makes an elaborate effort to smile*]
With an aspect evincing no wish to beguile,
By a long chalk; observe: —, ——, ———, ——
——, say, the eighth of a mile.

The sweet picture you paint, the events you describe,
Induce me to state—not as offer of bribe,—
If they'll vote me their chief, I will govern the tribe."

Roland and Hildegarde.

LEGEND OF THE

CASTLE OF THE DRACHENFELS.

I shall not offer apology for divesting this fine old Legend of the sentimental robe which it has so long worn, and arraying it, for a time, in a garb of mingled sentiment and folly. It probably has no foundation in fact,—being one of those poetic fancies with which the imaginative German mind loves to invest a land where every hill has its castle ruin and every valley its mysterious dell. I have treated the old baron somewhat roughly; but he was probably a brigand chief, like the most of those castled knights of the middle ages. The Lady Hildegarde is no doubt a mythical person; but the Knight Roland belongs to veritable history.

—o—

CANTO FIRST.

On the top of a very precipitous crag,
Near the beautiful river Rhine,
In a castle regarded as fine,
By men of old times,
Who had very few dimes,
(Pfennings, kreutzers—whatever they call
The filthiest lucre of all),
Many ages ago,
As the legends show,
There lived a rough, crusty old German wag;
(That is: if it's funny to bluster and brag,

To dress-up in steel and bestraddle a nag,
And by sort of grand larceny gather in swag,
To replenish the coffer, the pocket, or bag).
A baron was he,
Of uncertain degree;
But a man it was quite as unsafe to rebuke;
As a viscount, a marquis, an earl, or a duke,
Or a monarch, of Earth's very highest select,
Or a mastiff abroad with his stub-tail erect,
Or a poodle at home, unto stranger unkind,
With a predisposition to bite him behind.

The old baron's blood was as limpid and clear
As that in the veins of a prince, or a peer,
Or the haughtiest chief of a Highland clan,
With kilt and plume jaunty,
Pants absent, or scanty,
Or an orient sultan, much-loving and lazy,
With ideas on matters of piety hazy,
And a general set-up remarkably sleazy,
Or a sagamore, war-painted—full black-and-tan,
Or a Spanish hidalgo, or any man
That comes of a noble line,
And was spiced by much beer and acidulous wine,
Made beside the above-mentioned river, the Rhine.

The date of his birth is now lost, I trow,
And the year of his death was so long ago,
That the chronicles, moth-eaten, mouldy and brown,
On index and page
Fail to mention the age
When he took his last drink,
And threw down the mug,

And winked his last wink
In the death-angel's hug,
As his spirit went out and his body went down;
And the devil, I think,
Secured the wine jug,
To hold as a proof of his claim,—to present
As a check for his baggage wherever he went.

His castle is crumbling to dust, and I doubt,
Should you travel the whole Earth over,
And interview Christian, or rover,
If a trace you could find of his gore,
In any man's veins about,
Whom the world could not now do well without,
And could have spared long before.

I would not defame him, long perished and gone,—
Dead for many a hundred year,—
For, should he on Earth reappear,
And I happen to meet him, in open, or glen,
I would do, as I think would the bravest of men,
Not bound by a knightly vow,
Nor remarkably fond of a row;
For in such an emergence all honor I'd pawn,
And run with the speed of a frightened fawn,
From the glint of his ghostly spear.
But the tale must be told, do it damage, or grace,
For those castled chiefs were a turbulent race,
Like most of the old-time swells,—
As many a legend tells—
Caring little for matin or vesper bells,
For bishop, or priest,
In service full blast,

Or the freaks of the beast
From heaven out-cast;
And, when lance was in rest,
And wrath was in play,
Full as bad as the best,
In a foray, or fray,
Was the lord of the Castle of Drachenfels.

THE CHIEFTAIN.

On the pages of Scott and Macpherson,
A chief is a very grand person;
But could we, of these days,
By a magical spell,
Those old fellows raise,
And force them to tell
How in business they moved,—
If in real estate,
What their title deeds proved,
Giving warrant and date,
I think it would puzzle them
To show when they bought any;
And Satan would blush,
And tell them to hush,
Or start up and muzzle them,
Should they try to explain how they got any.

THE KNIGHT.

When the minstrels sing of the "good old time,"
We love the tune and endure the rhyme,
But the claim is a canting hypocrisy—
Like a proud but decayed aristocracy.
The phrase is a humbug—a lie *per se*,
And herein do history and I agree.

Perhaps I do damage—perhaps I ought—
To much that the novelists say,
In the general "yarn-spinning" way,
When fancy takes flight,
And they tell of the knight,
In his garment of mail,
With a troop at his tail,—
How in bower he loved, how in tourney he fought.
Now, to tell the sad truth,
Those were times full of ruth,
And ravage, and misery sore,
When men, clad in steel,
With spur on the heel,
At the head of rude bands
Of lusty campaigners,
Their fighting retainers,
With spears in their hands,
And pennons, and banners,
With very bad manners,
Rode freely the country o'er,—
Especially those
Whose bones repose
In the graves by the Rhine's green shore.
They had little regard for the wrong, or the right;
They would revel in castle, would bluster and fight;
They would browbeat and cudgel a timorous wight,
And would pilfer his gain,—
His gold, or his grain,
Or his kine, or his swine,
Or his rich red wine,
And would leer upon maiden fair,
With her ringleted auburn hair,
And her full brown eyes so bright.

The Lord.

There seems to have been, since time began,—
  At least since the dawn of tradition,—
The need of a very superior man
    In every community,
    To seize opportunity
  To hold other men in subjection,
As a part of some deep and mysterious plan,—
  Or such is a fair supposition,
  And a matter for wholesome reflection.

In the great distribution of brain,
  The strangest conditions exist;
Some cannot use half they obtain,
  Some make all they can of their grist,
  And some had been better if missed.
Some men appear born for good luck,
  And others for nought but disaster;
Some prosper through wisdom and pluck,
  And some need the lash of a master,
  To urge them to trot along faster.

Who one man is rich and another man poor;
Why one is a lord and another a boor;
One man is a saint, and another a sinner;
One always a loser, another a winner;
Why one man should beg, and another man give;
Why the peasant must toil that his lord may live;
These questions, and thousands alike them arise,
To stupify ignorance, puzzle the wise!
  Who can tell why these strange contrarieties?
  Of this mixed-up condition tell why it is?

Ask nature the question,—
  She blunders and guesses;
Her every suggestion
  But folly confesses.
Ask for general reasons,—
  Her only reply
Is this: In their seasons
  All people must die.
Her processes show
When time comes to go
  This life we must give;
But what we don't know
  Is, why some people live.
One is blessed; one is cursed;
Both are equally nursed
  In this: drawing breath
From one common mother;
Yet they war with each other
  Till the sickle of death
Makes every man brother.

The range of conjecture is wide as the Earth;
But thought and conjecture both perish at birth.
Light breaks but to vanish in darkness of night,
When we ask of the ray: Whence cometh your light?
Borne outward, hurled back with the surge and the tide,
Or as wandering at night with no star for a guide,
One conclusion we reach, and one inference draw:
That such is the order of nature and law;
  And why so
  We don't know.

CANTO SECOND.

—o—

Section I.

—

HILDEGARDE.

And now for the story I wish to relate;—
And I own that my grief upwells,
When I think of her strait,
Of the sad, sad fate
Of Hildegarde, Lady of Drachenfels.

The daughter was she of the crusty old baron,
That terrible wag,
Accustomed to brag
That his family tree,
Genealogically,
Antedated Rameses, and Moses and Aaron.
Of her beauty the world made a deal of account,
And she pleased all the wooers that came to the mount.
A prince was once known—
Of age and full grown,—
To offer the maiden his heart, and his hand,
And his diadem, station, and cash at command.
Her answer was kind,
But his suit was declined.

And knights in gay armor
Fought battles to win her,
Which did not alarm her,
Nor, as with some it would,
Did the sight of the blood
Interfere with her dinner.
And the wisest inquirers
Could never discover
Her favorite lover,
Where chargers were sped,
And many a head
Was broken among her admirers.

I warrant she was a right beautiful maid,
Who, were she now living, and richly arrayed
In corsets and stays,
Silks, ribbons and laces,
In various ways,
And in divers odd places,
By some skillful milliner's hands,
Would rival a lovely Parisian swell,
And perhaps be as sweet as a Baltimore belle,
With an air as haught, and a brow as white,
A spirit as fearless, a foot as light,
With faults as few,
And a heart as true
As any in Worth's fairy robes bedight,
Or any in German lands.

Her lovers in number were many a score,
And she could have commanded as many more,
Had her list given out,
Had she reason to doubt

The strength of the passion they prated about.
But her heart was sealed up like a delicate thing,—
The dove in it nestling ne'er feathered his wing,
The warmth of her bosom ne'er kindled to flame,
Until Roland, the good knight, the paladin came
To the castle one day,—
A chief, by-the-way,
Of might so renowned,
That a tower, or a rock,
Would fall to the ground,
As though very unsound
And shaky in dread of his shock,
If he happened around.

The Paladin.

Sir Roland, of dragons and giants the foe,—
For his lance was their terror, his curse their ban,
Was a knight of the empire of Charlemagne,—
That very astute and remarkable man,
Who ruled half of christendom ages ago;
Who wrote better wisdom with sword than with pen,
Well keeping the peace among Christian men,
And I wish he were living to do it again.

The knight was abroad on a tour of inspection,
To see who was wrong and required the injection
Of steel through his diaphragm, stomach, or gullet,
With weapon so tempered that nothing could dull it.
He was jogging along,
And humming a song,
Or perhaps was, in musing, intending a journey
To slaughter a dragon, or tilt in a tourney,
Or with some other champion a bone to pick,

And, slightly distraught,
Punctuating his thought,
By giving the flank of his charger a kick.
But nature, neglected, accusing,
Aroused the good knight from his musing,
Calling loudly for something to drink or to munch on.
Then he saw the old castle perched high on a crag,
And he kicked with more purpose the ribs of his nag,
Whose midriff was also beginning to sag,
And rode up to ask of that funny old wag,
For himself, page, and charger the favor of luncheon.

For the knights had to drink and to eat,
Tissue, muscle and bone would decay so;
They required their allowance of meat,
Although the old tales do not say so;
And sometimes were happy to greet,
When hungry, a humble potato,
Or anything else they could play-to.

Section II.

THE MEETING.

Fair Hildegarde should have been, charmingly pensive,
Gazing down at the Rhine from her flower-covered casement;
But no; as their science was nowise extensive,
She was helping the cookery-folk in the basement.

When Roland beheld her preparing to "dine him,"
The roses were painting their pink on her face;
And when she came forward to welcome and "wine him,"
He was captured at once by her beauty and grace.
Before he had tasted a dish of her cooking,
He knelt at her feet and proceeded to say,
In the high sentimental and usual way,
That she was a person extremely fine looking,
And he would adore her through life and-a-day.
That nature, in forming her,
Heaven, in warming her,
Selected the choicest and nicest of things;
That she was an angel—a being ethereal,—
Who on Earth had just folded her radiant wings;
That nothing so excellent could be material.

(Here, in lines parenthetical, let me express
Some doubt as to whether the painter and poet
Are correct in their fancy,—their beautiful guess,—
Highly worthy, if real, I freely confess,—
As their verses and canvas so frequently show it:
That beings who come
From their radiant home,
Through high ether flying,
And clouds lower lying,
Commissioned to visit these earthly dominions,
Like birds, on their shoulders have quill-feathered pinions.
Grant that angels, as shown, look remarkably sweet;
Still some matters remain not peculiarly clear:
What particular use can they have for their feet?
And, having no tail-feathers, how do they steer?)

These thoughts as you please,—the suggestions are mine,
Not Roland's, who knelt at the feet of the maiden,
Discharging his love, like a cargo of wine,
Spices, tropical fruits, nuts, and everything fine,
From the hold of an Indiaman heavily laden.
I think, on that quite interesting occasion,
That he paltered no lie save a slight reservation;
That the eloquent youth
Told nothing but truth,
While keeping some few former love-affairs shady,—
Like any man wise;
As I surely would do,
If near Paradise,
And pleased with the view,
As he gazed on the charms of that modest young lady.

To bring this love-scene to a proper conclusion,
Let me say that, with some incidental confusion,
They felt for each other the tenderest passion,—
That they loved and were loved in the usual fashion.
That she bade him arise, of her heart the first winner,
And, with appetites good they sat down to their dinner.
When she saw him devouring her cakes and her pies,
And read the "fine frenzy" that beamed in his eyes,
Her whole heart became his. His was certainly hers
From the moment they met;
And I willingly bet
Any sum you desire—
Be it hundred, or higher,—
That she would have married him instantly then.

He, I know, would have throttled all other men
That had dared to molest him with any demurs,
To trouble his wooing with scandals, or slurs,
Or to cast one reproach on his knightly spurs.

Postponed.

I remarked, or I hinted it, some lines above,
That Hymen was willing, consenting was Love;
That the wooing, quite brief, had already transpired,
And the wedding could take place as soon as desired.

Short courtships are best;
But some find a pleasure,
With love for a guest,
In viewing their treasure,
Without caring to use it;
But they who do this,
Are unworthy of bliss,
For they only abuse it.

The baron had given consent,
And the lovers desired the event;
The day had been fixed for the wedding,
The bridemaids were nervous with glee,
The guests were all thitherward heading,
The priest almost fingered his fee;
When luck turned around,
And refused to attend them;
Nor, as afterwards found,
Did fortune befriend them.
For a message arrived which prevented the sport,
Demanding that Roland should forthwith repair,
With his very best speed to the emperor's court,

To join the crusaders then gathering there.
So the wedding was stopped, that Sir Roland might
go
And slaughter some Paynims—a thousand or so,
That infested Jerusalem, wrongly or rightly,
Loved the beautiful captive and clung to her tightly.

Section III.

THE CRUSADERS.

The monarchs of Europe, by solemn convention,
Had of all brother Christians demanded attention
To the fact that the Saracens, dwelling in Zion,
Were for even the Hebrews a poor substitution;
And bishops, in palaces, all urged the cry on;
And priests, in canonicals, spurred the small-fry on;
And the Pope lent his aid, in a long allocution,—
Advancing no cash, but a large absolution:
A thing of some weight
Then in matters of state;
And not without worth
In the markets of Earth,
(It was Tetzel who, later, retailed the commodity,)
And good with St. Peter, that testy old oddity.
He would open the gate of heaven
To an imp from Sathanas even,
If bearing a letter from Leo,—
Perhaps with a little misgiving,

And also a little low grumbling,
While an old-fashioned homily mumbling,—
But a man from Madrid, or Ravenna,
From Aix-la-Chapelle, or Vienna,
Or a gentleman hailing from Mayo,
From Paris, or Rome,
Wheresoever his home,
Would be welcomed with joy,
If bearing such ticket,
By that hearty old boy,
And passed through the wicket
To the richest and best of fine living.

It was currently thought
That grace could be bought
By thrusting a lance through a Paynim,
If, by hook, or by crook,
Bell, candle, and book,
And wafer the priest failed to gain him.
It was earnestly urged
That Jerusalem hoary,
Of the Islamites purged,
Would arise in her glory.—
That the Koran was only a record of lies,
Alluring away, not unto Paradise;
That Mahomet was false, and his followers vain;
That Zion, redeemed, would eternally reign,
If the Moslems were pushed, thrust, cuffed, kicked out, or slain.

That was ages ago; before learning and science,
Through the Moslems derived,
Had in Europe revived,

To promote among men intellectual aims;
When monarchs on arms placed the greater reliance,
With just enough learning to mark for their names.

Sometimes I have fancies peculiar, when thinking
That Palestine still is by Islam defended;
That pilgrims who bend at her sacred springs drinking,
Must, for safety, be still by the Moslem attended;
That the land of the Saviour by Paynim is guarded,
Whom Christians with curses have often rewarded;
That zealots abide
On the mount where he died,
Where poor Hagar's children keep Jacob's from fighting,
And the priests of Messiah from clawing and biting.

In the times that I write of scant grace one received,
Who refused to accept what the churchmen believed;
And Mohammedans then it was lawful to kill,
Whate'er their degree, were it low, were it high;
But the knights of the crescent had vigor and skill;
Could wield with high courage the sword or the lance,
Could swiftly retreat, or more swiftly advance
With wild battle cry,
And to combat defy
The flower of that Christian chivalry.

Section IV.

—

THE PARTING.

Sad was Roland, I warrant, his bride to resign,
And the other delights on the shore of the Rhine:
Fair Hildegarde's cates and the old baron's wine;
The hunting, the hawking,
The tournament gay,
The tender love-talking,
While riding, or walking
By moonlight away
With his sweet ladye-love;
And angels above,
And beings below
Overheard all the flow
Of their tender revealings
With envious feelings.
The jealous undines,
Beholding these scenes,
Made love to the young forest elves;
The fairies sighed dole,
Love-sick in the soul,
For they wanted some rapture themselves.

The parting was tender, as love-parting could be,
The kissing as ardent as love-kissing should be.
It was a sad day;
None around them were gay;
For Roland was greatly admired by them all;

His esquire was beloved by the maids in the hall,
And his war-horse content with his food in the stall.
Even the castle wild riders,
Rough rascals at best,
Sympathetic outsiders,
Were sad like the rest.
The baron, while pressing
The hand of the knight,
Gave him fatherly blessing,
And spoke of the fight,
With his usual brag,
In a tone of delight,
As who, if the gout had not laid him on shelf,
And his pockets were not so depleted of pelf,
Would not behind lag,
But would straddle his nag,
And go as a merry crusader himself.
The sweet lady cried; but as tears did not mend it,
She gave him a scarf, and she bade him defend it.

Sir Roland, while pressing his bride to his bosom,
Shed tears as though very unwilling to lose 'em;
And he vowed that, if fate did not stand in his way,
He would come back to her in a year and-a-day.
If slain, he would meet her,
Still happy to greet her,
At the post of his friend Simon Peter.

Then he called for his horse and his trusty esquire,
And trotted away to the court,—
And went with the crusaders, fame to acquire,
To rescue Jerusalem, sick with desire,
And get his full share of the sport.

Dull Times at the Castle.

Now Roland, the knight, has gone off to the wars,
To pound and be pounded, win honor and scars,
The knights of the crescent to meet and subdue,
  To drink orient nectar, eat dainty gazelle,
Or wrestle with bull-beef, if such he can chew,
  And moisten his hard-tack with water from well.

Poor Hildegarde sits in her bed-room, or bower,
Pining daily, I warrant, like frost-stricken flower,
Or one that the heat of the summer has wilted,
Or a maiden of forty years recently jilted.
Few amusements has she—no painting nor drawing;
No piano to pound and no harp to be clawing;
No chance to drive young fancy shop-keeper crazy,
And then trip to another shop fresh as a daisy;
No pledge of Sir Roland's devotion remaining;
No photograph album his picture containing;
No neighbors to gossip with—none of her station,
Except some rough count with a sad reputation,
Or the priest of the parish, with dismal salvation;
No fop of fourscore saying this-thing-and-that to
    to her,
Nor a mother-in-law of her duties to chat to her;
No lovers around her with tender attentions;
No temperance tea-parties, women's conventions;
No chance to indulge in some innocent folly,
To drive away blues, or subdue melancholy,
Such as fanciful pictures stage beauties portraying,
Or pieced-up old odds-and-ends gaily displaying,—
  (Crazy-quilting is what they now term it,—
  Making bed-covers fit for a hermit).

No dime novel bloody and frisky,
Full of medium brains and poor whisky.
Her spluttering candle, or taper,
Never dripped over story-newspaper
Full of scandals, and crimes,
And most villianous rhymes,
And a loud call for dimes
By the makers of pill and of potion,
That bring about health by the notion
Of stirring up bowel commotion;
By the venders of powder and lotion,
Who assure all the weak ones and simple,
That, in place of a freckle and pimple,
They may have a rose-tint and a dimple.
The palmer who traveled that way,
And the loose knight in quest of a fray,
Sometimes stopped to request hospitality,
Which was given with much cordiality;
They were welcomed with wine, cake and honey;
And, as none of them had any money,
They settled the score
With drafts on their lore:
Tales of fearful encounters narrating—
Of great dragons slain, or left dying;
Of hypogriffs through the air flying;
Of princesses wooed and still waiting;
And a vast deal of marvelous prating;
And—(I think they were given to lying.)

This was all very well for awhile,
The sweet lady's grief to beguile;
But news such as this will grow stale,
When one is in doubt of the tale.

And I warrant poor Hildegarde thought of her lover
Every hour of the day and the night, and moreover,
That, weeping, she wailed and cried "Ah! lackaday!
Why did Sir Roland, the knight, go away?"

Now, since we don't know
How Hildegarde used up her time,
To the East let us go,
And continue our rollicking rhyme
With the shout, and the roar, and the rush, and the rattle,
As the Christians and Saracens meet in the battle.

Taking horse for land journey,
And ship for the sea,
We will witness a tourney,
Or battle, may be,
Where Roland is slaughtering Saracen dogs,
Like a stalwart Chicago man butchering hogs,
Or a Frenchman expert disemboweling frogs;—
And see Roland hustle 'em,
See Roland tussle 'em,
With strategy puzzle 'em,
And the other knight champions gallantly bustle 'em,
For thy honor and glory O captive Jerusalem!

Before I complete the next canto,
There will probably be some hard fighting,
Or the muse in a lone *campo santo*
Shall be hidden from sight, by the rood!
For, beshrew me! if I, at this writing,
Am not in a valorous mood!

I shall take the best horse for my straddle,

And charge through the hosts of Mahomet,
And while hold out the straps of the saddle,
You will not see me slipping back from it.
I am sick af this light fiddle-faddle;
Make way for me, then,
A knight of the pen,
And a great intellectual comet.

—

Postscriptum.

Behold me my good steed astride,
And cutting a path through the foes;—
If I am unhorsed in my ride,
It will be all the worse for the foes,
If they break not my neck nor my nose.
If, in slaughtering pagans, my lance
Shall upset a poor Christian or two,
Let it count as a matter of chance,
And show what good lances will do,
When trusty the steel,
And handled with zeal,
By one who, through roar and through rattle,
Cares less for the cause than the battle.

CANTO THIRD.

—o—

Section I.

—

The Battle.

Now with the lightning speed of thought,
We reach the land of Palestine,
Where deeds of battle bravely wrought
Prove to each foe his cause divine.
And knightly plumes are waving high,
Beneath the Orient azure sky,
As bannered squadrons gleam afar,
In the full panoply of war.

'Tis morning, and the hosts prepare
Again to meet in combat there.
Behold! the Crescent, flashing bright,
Gives back the sunrays, silver white;
And Arab steeds impatient stand,
Arch their proud necks and spurn the sand.

Behold! the Christian lances gleam,
The banners wave and pennons stream;
And, best of all their chivalry,
List royal England's battle cry:
"Charge! for your honor, good knights, charge!
Had ever lance a fairer targe?

Let each approve his knighthood vow,
For Islam dares your courage now!
Down visor; lay the lance in rest;
Where points our sword, and gleams our crest,
There swiftly press your fiery steeds,
And do this day your bravest deeds.
Nobles of England! couch the lance,
And let our lion flag advance
Beside the oriflamme of France!
Christ smiles where his battalions ride!
O'erwhelm the Paynims, as the tide
Swift leaping to our rock-bound shore,
Awes and devours with rush and roar!
Charge! Austria, Spain, with courage high;
Charge! France, renowned in chivalry!"

In answering peal the Moslem host
Gives back the challenge and the boast;
And high above the battle shout,
Their royal leader's voice rings out:
"Charge! warriors of the Crescent, charge!
Allah will highest hopes enlarge.
Death were to you but lesser loss,
If to the Crescent bow the Cross.
Lo! where the proud invader comes;
Behind you are your peaceful homes,
Temples of learning, altar fires,
And graves of high and reverend sires.
Charge! Syrian horsemen; scour the plain,
And teach yon rabble band that vain
Are those who strive against the sword
Drawn by the servants of the Lord.
The Prophet, from yon azure height,

Shall view, this day, your gallant fight,
And open heaven's high gate to all
Who falter not, but bravely fall.
Mark where the royal lance I bear,
And raise our sacred standard there."

Then the wide plain and welkin blue
Rang with the shout of "Allah-hu!"
And foremost in the van was seen
The crest of royal Saladin.
And Richard's proudly quartered shield,
Far in advance upon the field,
Gleamed in the golden light of day,
And led the Christians' bright array.

The Onset.

In heaven's high arch no clouds appear;
The breath of morn is pure and clear;—
An instant, then the glowing sky
Is hid by dust from warrior's eye,
As swiftly on the squadrons sweep
In lengthened lines and masses deep.
Then met the hosts in war's wild shocks,
And as the tempest-riven rocks
Are hurled from heights to plains below,
Down went the warriors, foe on foe.
Where battle rages fiercest, there
The royal standards wave in air;
And gleaming swords flash back the light,
As princely leaders urge the fight
With war-cries fierce, exultant, wild;
And high the heaps of dead are piled,
Where lance, and battle-axe, and mace,

In gory lines their passage trace.

Brave deeds upon that toughten-field
Were done that day, and many a shield
That bore device and blazonry
Of warriors true of lineage high,
That in the morning flashed afar
A challenge to the wrath of war,
At evening, on the ensanguined plain,
Pierced by the lance, or rent in twain,
Lay scarce distinguished from the slain.
And steeds that bore their riders well,
Till steed and knight together fell,
Sank to the ground, in death to pour
Their baser stream with noble gore.

—

The foregoing is eloquent
Language, grandiloquent,
Or I am no judge of the article pure;
If written by Scott,
My purse to a dot,
His fame had been equally great and secure.
I promised to fight a great battle,
To make things prodigiously rattle;
If I have not done it,
Staked talent and won it,
I offer my back for the wattle.

I but imitate thus the old manner of telling
How the knight of the East
And the knight of the West,
Each mounted on beast,
And each doing his best,

Clad in helmet of steel and steel breeches and vest,
Met in conflict with buffeting, swearing and yelling
Like the——
Like Milton's dark spirit forever rebelling!
One fought for his home and his hope in Mahomet,
The land of his birth and the faith that he loved;
The other for something as vague as a comet,
And with furious zeal scarcely differing from it,
As often his deeds in the Orient proved;
For, apart from the best of the Christian battalions,
Not one man in ten knew for what he was fighting;
And most of the host were but scurvy rapscalions,
Whom a ducat bewitched,
And twenty enriched,
Having manners and linen by no means inviting.

For to seek a clean shirt
In that beggarly crew,
Had confused the expert,
And rewarded but few.

When men strike for home and for babies,
There is always excuse for the battle;
But to fight for a creed is like rabies,
Or murrain afflicting the cattle.

—

This maxim hath all wisdom told:
Man is the maker of his god!
For, since historic ages old,
Since human feet the Earth have trod,
The gods of men
Have ever been

Formed, as are they,
A thought in clay
Scarce equal to the common mold.

Else wherefore war and bitter strife,
When men of differing faiths compete,
Even with the waste of human life,
To see whose god is most complete?
As hope and light
Dispel the night
Of old-time ruth,
We learn that truth
Needs not the sacrificial knife.

Section II.

ROLAND IN BATTLE.

Where is Sir Roland? Where is he
Among that mighty chivalry?
Where'er his mail-clad steed is spurred,
And where his clarion voice is heard,
I warrant well his lance he bears,
And high his crested helm he wears.
True champion! brave in battle need,
Foremost in every knightly deed,
Hark! do you hear his shout afar
Ring out along the field of war?—

"Charge for a Roland!
Knights of Poland,

Denmark and Austria, France and Spain;
Charge for a Roland!
Knight of no-land;
Charge! and yon banner take;
Charge! for your bright lady's sake,
And win her fair hand and her rich domain!"

Where battle's fiercest front appears,
His charger leads the glittering spears;
Far as adventurous knights advance,
Still further points his gory lance,
His shield a shining target high
For bolts and javelins that fly
Thick as the withered leaves in air,
When storm-wind sweeps the forest bare.
Where gleams his battle-axe o'er all,
The foe must yield, or lowly fall;
And where the bravest Christians ride,
His voice directs the onset tide,
Till morn and noon-time pass away,
And evening dons her mantle gray.
Yet in the shock and rage of war,
True to the heart that throbbed afar,
A mark full fair as plumèd crest,
His lady's scarf is on his breast.

After the Battle.

Ah! many a wife, in her Syrian tower,
And many a maid in her jasmine bower,
Where the Jordan mirrored the westering sun,
Long wept for the deeds by that good lance done;

And many a Saracen chief, whose mail
Had weathered the storm of that vengeful hail,
By a sweep of his flashing blade was given
Swift passage from Earth to the Prophet's heaven.
Full many a waif from the desert vast,
By his ponderous mace to the ground was cast,
When the faithful courser, its rider dead,
With speed of the wind from the battle fled
Afar o'er the drifted sand, wildering, wild,
Bearing mute tale of woe to the wife and child
Of him who lay silent in death that day,
The lord of their tent and their pride and stay.—
For the bravest and best of the Christian van,
Was Sir Roland, the nephew of Charlemagne.

But where are the magical coat of mail,—
Armor of proof that shall never fail,
And the lance that in combat will ever prevail?
Where the helmet and crest ever haughty and high,
The shield that the foeman shall ever defy,
And the good knight that never shall lowly lie?
Now pray ye, good Christian, and pray ye well,
Where Roland, the knight and the paladin fell.

The Return.

Fain were I still to linger long
  Beneath the Orient skies,
And weave the magic web of song,
  As fancy's shuttle flies,—
With varied weft depict the throng
    Of warriors brave,

The onset wave,
And list the battle-cries.
Fain were I of the camp to tell:
What gallant knight, perchance,
Prevailed in tournament, or fell
Before the stronger lance.

Still would I stray o'er desert lone,
Where fitful night-winds wail and moan,
And sand-drifts swell,
In many a heap,
Like ocean waves by mighty spell
Wrapped in eternal sleep;
Or greet the morn and evening sun
With gold and crimson glory rays,
And sing the Magian hymn of praise,
Where Jordan's waters run.
And O! how charmed, with Arab maid
Reclining in the olive shade,
Where stands her pitcher by the spring,
To list the songs she loves to sing
With softest sighs,
Or flashing eyes
Responsive to her bosom's swell,
And voice and gesture pure and free,
Of Haroun and Zobeidee,
And tales of Orient glory tell.
Nor can I save with sorrow part
From those who, strong of arm and heart,
Strove to redeem, with lance and sword,
The heritage of Christ, their Lord.
In strains poetic would I gloss
The deeds of Richard, ever true—

One of the strong and faithful few
Of those grand warriors of the cross,
Who strove, but hapless, strove in vain,
Or only won to lose again.

High is the theme and rich the store:
Ungathered wealth of native ore.
Still lie fair jewels in the dust,
And some, encased in native crust,
Await the lapidary's wheel:
The free-revolving thought,
The pen by genius taught
Their hidden glories to reveal.

But not for me—
O! not for me
To tell the tale of history.
Farewell, thou sunny Palestine!
I leave thee to thy weal or woe;
Again on spirit wings I go
To that old castle by the Rhine.

Section III.

THE WAITING BRIDE.

On a battlement lofty the maiden stands,
In the twilight at close of the day,
Gazing off toward the sky, o'er the eastern lands
In the far distance fading away,

As though she would question the night, to discover
In the star that shone
Low in heaven, alone,
A sentinel watching and guarding her lover.
Her tresses unbound, in their auburn profusion,
Fall over her shoulders to hide the intrusion
Of star-gaze on white bosom pure as the snow,
And she sings, with a sweet voice thrilling and low:

Star of the twilight sky,
Shining so brightly there,
Is my true lover nigh?
Hears he my lonely sigh—
Love's tender prayer?
Guide thou his feet to my bower;
Tell him 'tis love's own hour.
Star of the twilight sky,
Is my true lover nigh?

Star of the quiet night,
Sweet in this evening scene,
Gaze on him calmly bright,
Chide him with tender light
From heaven serene.
Speak from the far golden gates:
Tell him his maiden waits.
Star of the quiet night,
Chide him with tender light.

But only the night-bird near
Gave heed with a listening ear,
And the sigh of the distant gale,
Response to her love-lorn wail.

And long gazed the maid toward the east afar,
But no answer came back from the twilight star;
The wind o'er its face a cloud-mantle threw,
And the night settled down with its chilling dew.

The Revel.

In the hall was a scene of wild revelry,
By the light of pine torches and blazing brands;
For the rich *drachen-blut* was there flowing free—
That generous wine of the castle lands.
On wainscot, and mantel, and high on the wall,
Hung trophies and spoils of war and the chase;
For a turbulent, aye, and a dauntless race
Were the rough old lords of the drachen hall.
The long, gabled roof and the rafters high
Were black as the midnight with soot and grime,
And the clattering shingles gave views of the sky,
As they crumbled and curled by the touch of time.
The wail of the wind through the beams o'erhead,
Around hidden recesses, high, wierdly dim,
Seemed the chant for a dance of the old-time dead,
And the shadows of revelers there,
Thrown upward by flame and glare,
Like a host of fantastic goblins grim.

The baron was roaring a boisterous song,
The burden of which was a very bad jest,
And his tipsy retainers were doing their best
To remember the chorus and bring it in strong;
But the words were high Dutch,
And they were not such,
And their heads were a-whirl and they sang it all wrong.

The Palmer.

As the light on the mountain grew pale,
And shadows crept over the vale,
And clouds low-lying,
And white scud flying
Betokened a night of extremely bad weather
For those who would couch for repose on the heather,
There was seen in the gloaming,
Afar off, but coming,
A "solitary horseman," on "Shanks his mare;"—
Long and loose was his robe and unkempt his hair.

The stranger that came up the valley so late,
Advanced till he stopped by the castle gate,
And he proved to be one of that vagabond brood
That roamed about bearing a palmer's staff,
Of castellan and cottager begging their food,—
Pretending to search for a shrine.
They never in public a beaker would quaff
Of brandy, or even of wine;
And their nearest approach to a generous laugh
Was a sort of lugubrious whine.
They always seemed very low-hearted and brown;
But in private, I warrant, they winked to a lass,
Trolled roundelays lustily, turned up the glass,
With eyes upon heaven as the wine went down.

The hour being past
For a neighborly call,
Or for men of his caste
To visit the hall,
The drawbride was up and the portcullis shut.

Most men, thus belated,
When night was so nigh,
Would scarcely have waited,
But gone off to try
For a crust and a bed in some neighboring hut.
But this palmer, not one of the commoner gang,
Was a minstrel, it seems, as well as a rover,
For with gesture of saint, but the voice of a drover,
While the wail of the wind through his melody rang,
He expressed his desire in the song that he sang.

THE PALMER'S SONG.

I have come from the land where the crusader's sword,
Flashing back the fierce stare of the orient sun,
Holds revel of death with the Saracen horde,
As battles are fought and the fields are won;
From the land where the date palms lowly wave
Over many a brave knight's lonely grave.
Knightly of kith and noble of race,
Let me in for the sake of our Lady of Grace.

I have many a tale of the tourney to tell,
Where knight won reward from his lady dear;
I have legends that charm like a magical spell,
And messages meet for a maiden's ear.
I crave of you fare that befitteth a guest:
A crust for my meal and a couch for my rest.
Knightly of kith and noble of race,
Let me in for the sake of our Lady of Grace.

I have traveled ah! many a wearisome way,
And must go forth again at the coming of morn,

To visit the shrine of Our Lady, and pray
For the child of mortality, lost and forlorn.
The night-wind is chilling, the storm cometh fast;
Give me shelter, I pray, from the pitiless blast.
Knightly of kith and noble of race,
Let me in for the sake of our Lady of Grace.

TROUBLE.

"Ho! warder!" cried out the old knight, in a rage,
"Who the deuce is it bellowing there by the gate?
Go, fetch me the rascal;—some mischievous page,
I warrant, whose purse is as poor as his pate!"

"May it pleasure my lord," said the warder, "I think
'Tis a palmer again, who is bound for a shrine."
"A palmer!" exclaimed the old chief;
"You might as well call him a thief!
However, go fetch him; a cup he shall drink,
And a jig he shall caper to pay for the wine.
All the better he'll pray
For a little rough play,
And the sport of a German free liver;
But bid him prepare
For a dance on the air,
If he tricks it this side of the river."

Up went the portcullis, the drawbridge came down
With a creak and a clang,
A clatter and bang,
When the palmer, sedately and slowly advancing,
Was seized by the warder,
According to order,
As the gentleman ring-master seizes the clown,

When the steeds in the circus are plunging and
prancing.
And he haled him along toward the banqueting hall,
With as little regard for his legs,
As a mule for a basket of eggs;
But a hand that was thrust from a rent in the wall
Drew the palmer away from his sight
So quickly that he, in affright,
And a state of extreme consternation,
At such an amazing salvation,
Believed him devoured by the night;
And he went to the hall with his limbs and his eyes
Expressive of fear and profoundest surprise.

The Hermit.

The priest at the board,
Not so drunk as his lord,—
At least not so frightfully swearing and yelling,
When he heard the strange tale that the warder
was telling,
Declared that the man was a heavenly stranger—
The ghost of some very distinguished old clerical
Dead person,—shoddy
In substance of body,
But in spirit alive,
Who chanced to arrive
At the castle, when, being in very great danger,
He was forced to resort to an old-fashioned miracle,
And had vanished away—had become atmospher-
ical!
Then he set down the cup,—
His revels gave up;

And the priest, from that day,
Was nevermore gay.
Private lodging he took on the mountain side,
In the cave of the dragon,
That Seigfried, the knight,
His fearless old nag on,
One day as he chanced up the mountain to ride,
Had conquered in fight.
There the good priest a hermit became,
Of the strictest propriety;
Saint—something-or-other his name;
His fine odor of piety
Was so strong that the faithful could smell it,
From afar o'er the mountain side.
He wore for a shirt
A thick coat of dirt,
For a penance, and never would "shell it."
He had herbs for his food, and a skull for society;
And after he died,
He was classed as a saint of the choicest variety.

Section IV.

—

The palmer, by some means, he never knew what,
For his head was a-whirl and his spirit affrighted,
Was strongly urged on, at a moderate trot,
Through passages dark,
Where the toad and the bat,
And the old brown rat
Had many a lark,

Till he came to a chamber most brilliantly lighted
With three flaring candles arranged in a row
On a table beside which a lady was sitting,
Who questioned him, while her sweet face was aglow,
Like the rose in the beautiful scarf she was knitting:

"Your news, gentle palmer, I pray you to state;
You have come, as you say, from the orient afar;
Do the Christians prevail? What the fortune or fate
Of the princeliest knight that went forth to the war?
Saw you Roland, the paladin, truest and best,
With the scarf of his one lady-love on his breast?"

"Sir Roland!" the palmer said, tapping his forehead;
"Sir Roland, the paladin,"—closing his eyes;—
Two simple old tricks of the man with a poor head,
Who tries to seem very important and wise.

"Yes; Roland," she answered; Sir Roland the knight,
So splendid in tournament, brave in the fight,
Whose bride is awaiting him somewhere, they say,
Whom he promised to wed in a year and-a-day.
Pray summon your wit man, if any you claim,
And tell what you know, and why hither you came."

"I saw not Sir Roland," the palmer replied,
"But I saw one who told me another man said
That the rumor is rife in the land, far and wide,
That the paladin sleeps on the battlefield, dead."

The lady sprang up with a shriek of despair,
Then sank in a swoon to the rush-covered floor;
And the palmer felt needles and pins in his hair,
As he fled, like a maniac, out through the door,
Climbed the wall, leaped the moat, and sped down to the river,
Plunged in.—and I hope he will stay there forever.

—

Some men will tell more than they know, or believe;
Not, perhaps, with intent to mislead, or deceive.
They will jump to conclusion, unstable at best,
Hear the half of a tale and imagine the rest.
They will tell what is false, until doubt has gone by,
Or will question the truth till they think it a lie.
A condition, a look is no hint to their tact;
They will blurt out a thought, be it falsehood, or fact,
From a very loose habit of thinking aloud;—
So a donkey will bray,
Any hour—night or day,
Little caring who hears,—
Have they sensitive ears,
Or the dullest one finds in promiscuous crowd.

—

TUMULT.

The baron was dozing,
Half drunk in his chair;
His men were reposing
Here, there, everywhere.
Some lay on the table,
And some on the floor;

Some were drunk in the stable;
And the general snore
Was like trouble at Babel,
With tribes in a roar.

But the baron awoke
When the shriek rang out,
And, beginning to poke
In a dazed way about,
Heard the warder call "Halt!"
And the women cry "Fire!"
Till from turret to vault
The confusion was dire.

He called for his lance,
With a maundering notion
That something, perchance,
Had raised a commotion;
Kicked those that were snoring,
Rushed out from the hall,
In darkness exploring
Far off from the wall;
Seeing nothing, but hearing
A plash in the river,
As sank, disappearing,
The palmer forever.

When the maidens went up to the desolate room,
Their lady was still very feeble and faint;
Her cheeks bore no trace of their former rich bloom,
But her lips, in low sighs, uttered many a plaint.
In their fullness of love,
They raised her and strove,
With sympathy tender, her trouble to learn;

And when memory came back,
She cried out: "Alack!
Sir Roland, my good knight, will never return!"

And Hildegarde mourned for her lover departed,
Believing the tale that his battles were done,
Till at last, in a state of despair, broken-hearted,
She retired from the world to the cell of a nun.

Section V.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

I have noticed that persons peculiarly "got up,"
With brains to the general average not up,
When soul becomes troubled and life seems a curse,
Take to pining and piety, scandal, or worse.
Now I would not assert, nor would have you infer
That I think those who give themselves up to the Lord,
From the common humanity cutting the cord,
Make a silly mistake—that they really err,
For useless are they among sensible people,
As a priest with poor brains,—
Prehistoric remains,—
In a church with scant pews but extravagant steeple.
If Heaven will take and take care of them, then
Give them fair benediction and hearty Amen.
It may be the very best thing they can do
To kill off the time until time comes for dying,—
Keeping out of the way, from the general view

Of those who, more practical, hearty and true,
Their lives to a far higher use are applying.

I believe that true penitence does not consist
In the living apart from our brethren of Earth,
As though one had for fellowship ceased to exist,
And nothing but prayer had a positive worth;
That worship is not a continual dirge;
That physical sigh is not spiritual purge;
That prayer is not piety, faith is not serge.

The above may not orthodox seem,
Unless you scan closely the sentence;
Then, perhaps, for my thought you may deem
That I stand not in need of repentence.

The Knight's Return.

But Roland was living. Alas! and alack!
For Hildegarde, bound by religion and vow,
Dead and lost to the world as I know she is now;
For, though wounded, his hope and true heart sent him back
For the bride he had left in the flush of her charms,
Who had bidden her youth and the world farewell,
Who was now a meek saint in a cloister cell,
Whom the abbess refused to restore to his arms.

Some men, so peculiarly placed, would have said:
"There are fishes as good in the vasty sea;
If I may not with her, with another I'll wed;"
But a lover far truer and nobler was he,
For a castle he built by the Rhine,
So near to that island shrine,

That from turreted tower,
When he had a spare hour,
He could gaze on the scene where his bride was praying
Among the sad nuns,
Who, as current thought runs,
Their credos and aves forever are saying.

—

ADVICE TOO LATE.

If I had been there to propose,
My suggestion had been that the lovers
Meet in secret at daylight close,
Under one of the leafy covers,—
Plan a quiet escape,
And get out of the scrape
Before the next day,
In that sensible way;
Leaving abbess, and church,
And nuns in the lurch;
Then live ever after as good people ought to;
As good, loving people have ever been taught to,—
As nature has bade 'em,
Since Eve, the wise madam,
Raised Cain with old Adam,
In the strait that those persons were brought to.

The tale I have told,
As the chronicler old,
To the current tradition attending,
In a more direct way,
Gave it out, but I pray
Tale may nevermore have such an ending.

So lived the poor lovers,—he in his lone tower,
Indulging his grief,
Thus finding relief;
She wedded to heaven in a mystic relation,
As hoping to win the supreme approbation,
By closing her heart to the claims of mortality,
Until death reunited them,—flower to the flower,—
To bloom side by side in some other locality.

The foregoing carries the old Legend to its original conclusion. It has been suggested that to leave the knight and his lovely lady in situations so unpleasant to themselves and so unsatisfactory to the reader, is an act of unkindness; therefore I have, thanks to the amiable hint, carried the Legend forward to a more natural termination. A captious critic may condemn this, as taking an unwarrantable liberty; I shall accept censure meekly.

The solecism in bringing upon the same field of action certain persons who lived in separate times may be objected to; but for this transgression I take shelter under the generous wing of Scott, who did a like act of literary hardihood, and had the grace to make acknowledgement.

CANTO FOURTH.

—o—

Section I.

—

AS I LIKE IT.

A complaint and a protest have come to my ears,
Against leaving those lovers so lonely, unfriended.
It were best, when one reaches virility's years,—
Say twenty, or more—
Not less than a score,—
To let love have its way,
Give emotion fair play,
As I think from the first upon Earth was intended.
In affairs of the heart,—
I call it the brain,—
But whatever the part,
The presumption is plain,
That nature her claims will not loose nor forego,
Till we honestly pay every debt that we owe.
From Helios aflame,
To Earth's lowest retreat,
Her laws are the same,
In gradations complete.
The star to the sun,
The moon to the star,

The brook from the hill,
To the river the rill;
Kin currents will run
Till they mingle as one,
Meet they near or afar.

We cannot dissever
The part from the whole;
The needle will ever
Be true to the pole,
The bee to his queen,
The bird to his mate;
Love unions are seen
In all nature sedate.
John with Jenny can clean
Best the platter and plate.
There's many a lout
Had been nothing without
The love of some bright-eyed Kate.

—

The legend I give as I heard it,
But I own that I've failed thus to word it;
In a general view,
It may all be true,
Or the chronicler feigned or inferred it.
I have stuck to his text,
Save in methods and means,
Although somewhat perplexed
By the principal scenes;
For I feared that the person who wrote it,
Would come from his grave,
And solemnly rave,
And cudgel me did I misquote it.

The Germans who live near the Rhine,
Tell the tale, and they never decry it;—
The legend is theirs, but the moral is mine,
And yours, if you care to apply it.

Had I been the writer,
The close had been brighter;
The lover so true—
Such lovers are few—
Should not of his sweet hope have been disappointed,
Nor his beautiful bride with the chrism annointed.
To the deepest despondency I would have carried them,
And then, to their high satisfaction, have married them.

With the general leave,
I the matter will mend;
Let my fancy conceive
How the story should end.
I will take up the tale at the point where the palmer
Caused Hildegarde's anguish, but not with intent,
When he, without waiting to comfort or calm her,
Rushed down to the river and into it went;
When the deep and indignant old Rhine did
For him what the sea,
As the "Fathers" agree,
For the devils that troubled the swine did.

Section II.

—

Love in sadness.

The poor maiden stands, like a blighted thing,
Like a fair flower pierced by a poison sting,
By the casement high in her lonely tower,
  Gazing off down the cliff toward the river Rhine,
Sad, tearful and wan, at the midnight hour,
  Tasting the cup of life's bitter wine.

Two pure twin stars through a cloud-rift throw
Their silvery rays on the waves below.
Where, tossed by the ripples that fall and rise,
  Like the restless beat of a bright bird's wing,
They gleam like the myriad glittering eyes
  That flash in a diamond bridal ring.
It is omen of promise of happier lot,
But her spirit is dark and she reads it not.
Thoughts, taking the semblance of things of gloom,
Seem to hover around in her darkened room;
Then away they rush, to the black night cast;
    Ever coming and going,
    Like storm-waves flowing,
Or the sweep and the lull of a tempest blast.
    To her soul comes a moan
    From the valley so lone,
As though nature were saying, with sympathy sore,
O lady! thy lover will come nevermore!
And she trembles, with quick, wild-pulsing fears,
When the night-bird's note in the wood she hears,
As it springs from the bough, with a warning cry,
Where a lonely hind goes wandering by.

And she questions the night, from her widowed heart:
Will the morning return? Will the shadow depart?
Will sorrow withdraw its envenomed dart?

Thus many a night shall she pine and grieve,
And many dark thoughts shall her fancy weave,
And many a friend shall with tenderness seek
To bring back the rose to that blanching cheek.
And many a free knight shall ride that way,
  But not the good knight of her heart the lord;
And many a troubadour thither stray,
And touch the lute to his roundelay,
  Or chant, as he sweeps the bolder chord,
The tale—ah! sad are the tales that tell,
How the knights of the Christian legions fell,
    And the moan of death,
    And the parting breath
Came heavily forth through the visor bars,
Where lances went down like the setting stars.

Section III.

NONENWERTH.

In the river Rhine is an island fair,
  Like an emerald floating by magical spell;
And the nuns of Nonenwerth worship there,
    Or they did, we are told,
    In that good time old,
When Roland and Hildegarde loved so well.

The island is bowered by flowering trees,
That bend in protection o'er lilies and roses.
And is kissed, as a bride, by the brisk morning breeze,
Or fanned by cool zephyrs when daylight reposes.
The walls of a convent rise shapely and white,
Above the rich masses of foliage green;
And where the boughs open soft patches of light
Give a grace and a charm to the beautiful scene.

Thither often the eyes of the lone maiden turned,
As her soul for its solitude piously yearned;
And hope gave its promise, as thought grew apace,
That nothing on Earth could be more complete,
For a soul that in nature no comfort could trace,
Than the sacred repose of that quiet retreat.

What the Baron thought.

She mentioned the matter one day to the baron,
Who at once became angry and raved like a madman;
Which proves that a long dissipation will wear on
The best man alive till it make him a bad man.
He called her a fool,—
Which was probably true,—
Said he could not keep cool
With such folly in view.
He said 'twas unwise
From the world to retire,
To waste upon sighs
Every holy desire.
In a general way he declared that to shut up

Oneself as though dead,
Was a crime and a sin;
Not thus daily bread
Could one honestly win;
That he felt in his old age confoundedly cut up.

What I think.

Now I think that when tempests of sorrow prevail,
We should not let them hope and ambition o'erwhelm;
But should meet them with fortitude high,
And boldly their terrors defy;
Like the seaman, who, when in the grasp of the gale,
Calls the watch to their places:
Clew-garnets and braces,
Bunts, yard-arms, reef-tackle, and shortens the sail,
And puts the best man in the ship at the helm.

Thus relieved, see how well his good vessel behaves:
She careens to the tempest, which nothing can stay,
And, instead of resisting, rides over the waves,
Which sweep off to leeward, defeated, away.

I admit that a ship is a different thing
From a woman, except in some matters and ways:
Such as topsails, to'-gallant-sails, sky-sails and spanker,
And in this: that, unless you watch closely her swing.
She is sure to fall off the true course, or miss stays,
When another craft, on the wind, tries to out-rank her.

Perhaps I may add, with propriety, here:
In a storm it is difficult either to steer.

The desire of the maiden was caused by her trouble;
But I think that she took the wrong course for a cure;
For sorrow, when nursed,
Is but comfort reversed:
Like a pain, slight in youth, but in age become double,
Which time has but made us content to endure.

Section IV.

CLOISTERS.

What the nuns do in cloisters I care not to know;
But I think they scarce realize "heaven below."
Unless they imagine that heaven must be
A place where no mortal from worry is free.
The lives that are lived by those brides of the Lord,
That sometimes will timidly venture abroad,
With hats of the oddest, serge, crucifix, cord,
The folds of a napkin enclosing the hair,
And with faces expressive of nought but despair,
Confuse and confound me with wonder and doubt,
As I gaze at the poor souls slow moving about,
Like corpses revivified—just from the tomb,
Indued with all life except vigor and bloom.

Does Heaven demand a condition so sad?
Are the comforts of Earth so unspeakably bad,

That a laugh is unholy; that joy is a sin,
And love an emotion impure?
Shall abjectness alone future happiness win?
Woe eternal contentment secure?

A life spent in praying is life spent in vain;
Good deed is at most but a rarity;
For this sort of worship I cannot refrain
From commending the Sister of Charity.

I grant that to pray is to do very well;
But to do nothing else is to do very ill,
For weak is the wisdom of those who rebel
Against nature, whose working we cannot compel,
Unless human effort shall second the will.

We read that an old prophet prayed where a hatchet
Was sunk in the Jordan, by dropping;
That it floated at once, for the workman to catch it
A go on again with the chopping.

But the good prophets long ago ceased to exist;
Now-a-days, if a man would be thriving,
Should the hatchet he uses thus part from his fist,
He could get it the quickest by diving.

Life's lessons and all its great unities prove
That those who to heaven would rise,
With nature's high law should in harmony move,
For only the happy are wise.

To search for the truth and pursue it,
To strive in the great field of labor,
Is to do what is right, as I view it,
For we thus honor God and our neighbor.

To live but for self,
  Merely praying for others,
And to put on the shelf
  Plain duty to brothers,
Is a very slow way
  Good treasures to lay up
Against the great day,
When mortals, they say,
  All debits must pay up.

This free world was made for free people to live in,
  To possess and enjoy in life's brief, busy season;
And till nature shall give out no person should give in
  To what may be conquered by effort and reason.

These thoughts do not blink;
  Adopt or reject;
Some surely must think
  They are good and correct.

I confess it is somewhat ungracious to set up
  My meat against fish on another man's platter;
But when trouble assails me, my way is to get up
  And learn, if I can, what the deuce is the matter.

CANTO FIFTH.

—o—

Section I.

—

Taking the Veil.

Why toll the convent bells?
And why are the censers swinging?
Never with funeral knells
Are the nuns so sweetly singing.
Is it the matin hour?
Is that the vesper chime?
No; for the shadows of tower
And tree that fall
Near the convent wall,
Mark only the midday time.
And why are the stolèd priest
And the bishop in vestments there?
It is not a day of feast,
Nor of fast, with its solemn prayer.

Why gather the crowds at the open gate?
Why kneel on the cold stone floor?
And who is the pilgrim that cometh so late—
So late to the convent door?

Why wanders his gaze from the island away
To the castle against the blue sky?
Why hides he his face from the light of the day?
And wherefore that low, low sigh?

But the bells are ringing,
The censers are swinging,
And the kneeling crowd,
With heads low bowed,
In whispers pray
For one not dying,
Nor lowly lying,
Yet passing away.

A mournful procession is winding down
From the castle down to the river;
For Hildegarde now,
With a cloister vow,
Her love, her devotion to Roland will crown,
By leaving the world forever!
The great, open world forever!

She pauses to think,
At the river's brink,
For a moment to think of her young life ending,
And the loved who her steps are so sadly attending;
Then, waving adieu
To the sorrowing few
Around her, she sails for that island shrine,
To finish the cup of life's bitter wine:
And the boatmen strong,
As they waft her along,
Keep time to her sighs as their oars are bending.

Now the river is passed,
And she gives one last,
Last gaze on her home so fair;
Then, raising her eyes
Toward the pitiless skies,
She clasps her cold hands in prayer.
But no message of love,
From the realm above,
Bids her sorrow and sighing depart;
And she passes along
Through the kneeling throng,
With a widowed and breaking heart.

Why still by the door does that pilgrim stand?
Why stands the lone pilgrim there?
And why, when his sombre robe touches her hand,
Does she start like a frightened hare?

But the censers swing,
And the veiled nuns sing,
As on toward the chancel they lead her slowly;
To the bishop she bends, as a lily pale,
And then, with a sigh, as her love's last wail,
She kneels on the ground by the altar, lowly.

Her beautiful head,
While the mass is said,
Is bent toward the jeweled shrine olden;
And her ringlets, unbound,
Fall her shoulders around,
In soft masses wavy and golden.

Now the chants are done,
And she timidly glances

Where a sad-eyed nun
With the abbess advances,
The curls from her bended head to sever,—
The curls which her lover had pressed!
The curls which his lips had caressed!
And the bishop has asked—Does she truly consent
To give up the world with its care and content,—
The free, bright world forever!
And thought, for a moment, takes wing and flies
To the great, broad Earth and its sunny skies,—

To the fawn that up-springs
To her loving call,
Where the dark ivy clings
To the castle wall,
In the world which she leaves forever!

To the falcon she loves,
So daring in flight;
And her beautiful doves
In their plumage bright,
In the world which she leaves forever!

To the birds on the trees
By the flowing Rhine,
To the humming of bees
Through the flowering vine,
In the world which she leaves forever!

To the joy of her soul,
In its pure love-birth,
Kith, kindred, the whole
Of the beautiful Earth,
In the world which she leaves forever!

O God! is it right thus to sever
Pure souls from the free world forever?

But before she can utter the fatal word,
The voice of the pilgrim and stranger is heard,
Crying: "No! I FORBID!"—and with rapid stride
He passes beyond the chancel rail;
His pilgrim's garb he has cast aside,
And a warrior he stands in his shining mail!

The poor, kneeling girl, when that voice she hears,
Starts tremblingly up,—then, with eloquent tears,
She springs to his side!—but her senses take flight,
As she sinks at the feet of her faithful knight,
Who raises her, fondly, with tender embrace,
And gazes with rapturous love on her face!

Disturbance in the Convent.

Did you ever, good reader, throw cudgels and stones
At a hornet's frail, brown-paper nest,
Then scamper away, almost hearing the bones
As they rattled and shook in your chest?
If you have you can partly imagine the scene
In the convent when Roland appeared;—
He, of all the assemblage, was somewhat serene;—
The nuns looked sad,
But were probably glad;
The abbess looked mad,
And the bishop a man to be feared.

The knight, with strong arms,
His fair burden bore,

Now richer in charms
Than ever before,
Away from the convent's open door.

They tried to restrain him,
To daunt and detain him;—
The bishop cried: "Sacrilege! sacrilege! catch him!"
But no one was there in condition to match him.
"Desecration!" the abbess cried; "Stop her! O stop her!"
For Roland seemed very unwilling to drop her.
But swiftly, not heeding
Their anger or pleading,
He bore off his sweet but insensible bride,
And placed her once more by her old father's side.

—

Why linger to tell
All that after befel
In the convent that lost the fair lady?
It was clearly a case
Calling meekly for grace;
And a present of swine,
Meal, butter and honey,
Some barrels of wine,
And some ready money,
Made the bishop and abbess keep shady.
The former was pleased;
The latter, appeased,
Remarked that, considering all things about her,
The convent could better be managed without her.

Section II.

—

THE WEDDING.

I leave to the reader's conjecture,
The rapture of all at the meeting;—
The baron, of course, gave a lecture,
Very brief and profane,
And entirely in vain,
Supplementing his fatherly greeting.

His remarks were, I fear, interlarded
With words not in use in the churches,—
Words which nowhere polite are regarded,
As I learn in my social researches.

But anger is brief when the heart is
Appealed to by love's tearful wailing;
And your testy but tender old parties
Are aye better loved for their failing.

Without further miscarriage,
The wedding and marriage
Took place a few evenings thereafter;
And the banqueting hall
Was garlanded all,
From threshold and wainscot to rafter.

The bishop was there,
In canonicals fine;
In his mood debonaire,
And in aspect benign.

The nuns were not there
To sanction the "crime;"
Very likely at prayer
They were "putting in time."

A princess was there,
With a waterfall dread,
Manufactured of hair,
At the back of the head.

Old lovers were there,
By the baron's request;
They, throughout the affair,
Were as gay as the rest.

The minstrel was there,—
Not the man at the crank,
Who grinds out an air
With a twist and a yank.

The palmer was there;—
Not the fellow that lied;
His body was where
It could safely abide.

In short, there was there
Such a crowd, young and old,
That the butler's despair
It was pain to behold.

Whole cattle and swine
Were lavishly roasted;
In barrels of wine
Everybody was toasted.

The lordly old baron presided in state,
High-throned at the head of the hall,
In his mood and his bearing serenely sedate,
As he greeted the guests one and all.

In a new suit of mail, burnished up very brightly,
His merry-men all by his side,
With spear in his hand, which he held very tightly,
He appeared like a king in his pride.

The bride was arrayed in the choicest of things,
Like a bird of the orient minus the wings.
All the hues of the rainbow were shown in her dress,
And some which no words can in measure express.
Her gown was milk-white, with a border of red;
An orange-flower wreath was arranged on her head.
Her corsage was garnished with glass-blower pearls,
Among which hung wavy her fair golden curls.
Her shoes were blue kid, having buckles of gold;
Her laces were fine, very dirty and old.
Her stockings pale yellow and red stripes displayed,
Which her robe, short in front, very sweetly betrayed.
Her gloves, sixteen-button, were wonders to see;
Her handkerchief bore the initials "H. D.",
And was perfumed with that very excellent scent
Old Johan Farina had skill to invent,
Whose only true shop by the guides we are shown,
Everywhere in the fragrant old town of Cologne.
Her veil was *illusion*—(by the good abbess given,
And a very fair joke for a "daughter of heaven.")
This trosseau, unique, was invented by Worth,—
Man-milliner—doubtless the best on the Earth.

The bridegroom was gorgeous in armor of steel,
Which, minus the helmet, was full to the heel;
And he shone, in the glare by the pine torches made,
Like a burnished steam fire engine out for parade.

As they stood by the altar, or knelt during prayer,
I warrant they were a right elegant pair;
In the service their answers came promptly and pat in,
And the good bishop blessed them in second-class Latin.

The Banquet.

The banquet that followed was worthy the sire
Of a maiden so fair, an occasion so grand;
The viands were all that the guests could desire,
And the wine was the oldest and best in the land.

The baron and bishop hobnobbed at the table,—
The latter distinguished for grace and for suavity;
And each appeared anxious to see which was able
To hold the most wine without losing his gravity.

The strife was protracted, for both were sad drinkers,
Not apt with the old Rhenish wine to get muddled;
They drank till the other men closed all their winkers,
And under the tables were cosily cuddled;
But the baron was floored ere the bishop was fuddled.

Miscellaneous Poems.

A WORLD LOST AND RE-DISCOVERED.

O'erwhelmed and buried in their ocean graves,
  Through ages hoary with unnumbered years,
The dead have lain, where roll Atlantic waves
  Above the highway of the hemispheres.

Perhaps Atlantis linked the favored East
  To the broad lands of the mysterious West
Untrod, except by savage man and beast,
  Beyond the bound of that volcanic crest;

And they who in some cataclysm sank,
  Where not one vestige of their work remained,
Bore from the world all tokens of their rank,
  And all the light from kindlier peoples gained.

They lived in times so distant, so remote,
  That we, with false exactness, must relate,
With fancy's aid and thought, their deeds of note,
  Their customs, duties, and their awful fate.

Tradition gives but vague, uncertain clue,
And that unworthy as the jungle light
That lures to death; for unto us the view
Is like a page unread of sombre night.

The dawn that heralded historic day,
And roused the orient from its slumber deep,
Came ages after they had passed away,
Whelmed, gone, forgotten in their endless sleep.

As though adrift, vast continents were lost;
The march of progress ceased on eastern strands,
Where erst the heralds of the peoples crossed,
With tardy tidings from mysterious lands.

And thus they slept. The western darkness grew,
Dense and more dense through waning memory
Of all traditions that their fathers knew,
Of realms beyond the vast, forbidding sea.

Age after age swept by. Columbus saw
The westward path, a nation far away,
As through mirage of science, and the law
Which governed Earth, and deemed it fair Cathay.

Then launched the brave adventurer his bark,
Gift of a queen; then trimmed the swelling sails,
And led his keels along the pathway dark,
Unknown, unfathomed, stirred by untried gales.

What though Atlantis lay beneath the waves,
By swift convulsion to destruction hurled;—
The dead, forgotten in the ocean caves,
Were needed not to point the distant world.

O! who can muse, with listless, careless thought,
Upon that man majestic, and the force
That urged him, scant-equipped, and vagnely taught,
Toward skies unseen to shape uncertain course?

Surely the hand of God was then displayed;
His finger pointed to the distant realm,
And meekly the brave mariner obeyed,
Hope on his prow and courage at the helm.

No! not the lamp mysterious, whose rays
Lead the worn traveler on a dangerous way,
That glimmer of the torch, whose moving blaze
Told the great captain where a haven lay.

That feeble gleam thus piercing nature's night,
Was the precursor of a grander morn,
A day of liberty, when learning's light,
Spread broadcast, should redeem a world newborn.

The savage saw at morning. Let us pause,
And draw a line across historic page;
Not to Columbus may we trace the cause
That fired his lofty soul with righteous rage.

The wondering savage welcomed. Fatal trust
For him! Thus ancient progress ever strode
O'er peoples conquered, humbled to the dust
By iron heel and fell oppression's goad.

Yes; draw the veil of mercy; let our eyes
Rest on bright scenes, for contemplation food;—
The savage still retreats; new temples rise,
Where, in the ancient days, the wigwam stood.

What were the grace of kings to his compared,
Who gave to Spain a realm before unknown;
Whose skill accomplished what his courage dared—
A promise kept, a conquest all his own?

The richest jewel in the monarch's crown,
Though worn by ancestors of ancient birth,
Could add no lustre to his high renown,
Whose faith revealed another half of Earth.

Nay; pause not here; Columbus glory earned,
While the twin sovereigns dubious fame obtained,
When from Granada's towers a race they spurned
Through whom high arts and learning had been gained.

Honor Columbus! Can the ready tongue,
Though apt with sounding word, or swelling phrase,
Add one new grace his laurel leaves among,
Or to a grander height his glory raise?

Honor Columbus? Yes; dear homesteads now,
States, arts, high commerce, smiling peoples, these
May meetly honor him who urged his prow
To seek Cathay beyond unmeasured seas!

LE PAYSAN.

Monsieur le Marquis dwells in state,
A palace his chateau;
His guests are courtly, proud and great,
Who all life's comforts know.
Content, I love my cottage home,
To share my humble store

With neighbors who at twilight come
To dance beside my door.

Monsieur le Marquis sleeps on down;
I on a bed of straw;
His loaf is white; my crust is brown
And sometimes hard to gnaw.
Yet would not I, for all his wealth,
For all his acres fair,
Exchange for his my rugged health,
And greater burdens bear.

Monsieur le Marquis does not toil
In patient, humble mood,
To earn, with sweat, his bread, and oil,
And all his dainty food.
My hands are rough, from handling oft
The pruning-hook and vine;
They press the grapes when ripe and soft,
That he may drink the wine.

Monsieur le Marquis came of age
When I was forty-odd,
And well had learned the wisdom-page
Spread out along the sod.
Life-hours with varying measures fly;
"Slow move" is nature's creed;
Monsieur will rest, perhaps, where I
His epitaph may read.

FOR AN AUTOGRAPH ALBUM.

A name is but a little thing,
Yet oft it serves some thought to wing,

Of pleasant import, tender tone,
Like memory music, heard alone
Where silent earth and sea, at even,
Look up through moonlight unto heaven.
Lady, when mine you hap to view,
May it bring music thoughts to you.

IN THE COMING TIME.

As the blue is turning gray,
By the fading touch of years,
And the wearers pass away,
And the mourners dry their tears,
So shall thought that giveth pain,
Slowly, gentler passing, cease;
Then, concordant, shall remain
Faith, prosperity and peace.

As the gray is bleaching white,
And the sword is gathering rust,
When the warriors old unite,
Kindred in the peace of dust,
Living children shall agree,
Patriots in all days to come;
And the song beloved shall be
Father-land and mother-home.

Then our glorious flag shall wave,
Union stars shall lustre shed,
Loved by all, o'er every grave
Sacred to the gallant dead;
Every vain regret shall end,
Lost to memory evermore,

And a blessing shall descend,
Full from Heaven's exhaustless store.

Then America shall grace
With her gifts memorial hours;
Then her thoughtful care shall place
Over all the votive flowers.
Of her white robe every fold
Shall display, in tender hue,
Red and gray, with stars of gold
Gleaming on her cincture blue.

ALL IS NOT LOST.

All is not lost, O Soul in sorrow! groping
To find the pathway leading to the grave,
Where the sad shades, with hands inviting, wave
Toward ebon gates, where comfort dies in hoping.

The sombre clouds that mar the smiling meetness
Of summer landscape when the sun goes down,
May break at midnight, and the green and brown
Resume, at morn, their beauty and completeness.

What though the chilling winter snow be falling,
And roses lie inert beneath its fold;
The northward-tending sun shall warm the mold,
And break their slumber, all to duty calling.

What though thy friend may seem to greet unkindly,
With eyes that beamed but joy in other days;
Perhaps thou seest dimly—through a haze
Begot by thine. Love should condemn not blindly.

MY BABY'S SHOES.

Those little brown relics, my baby's shoes,
That I keep with my treasures rare,
I would not from sight and from memory lose,
For aught that the world could spare.
They remind me of darling when young and mine,
All mine, in my loving arms,—
Dimpled cheeks, rosy lips, and blue eyes so fine,
And her thousand sweet baby charms.

One heel is low-worn, the other is gone,
And the linings are soiled and frayed,
For fleet were the feet, on the floor o' lawn,
Of my beautiful, blue-eyed maid.
The faded morocco is hard and dried;
The counters are crushed and low;
And one has a very bad rent in the side,
And each has a hole in the toe.

Three buttons are left of the dozen or more,
And there's many a wrinkle gray
Where once the gay sheen of the shop they wore,
But they're lovelier far to-day.
O! I wonder if babies in paradise wear,
With their jewels and robes complete,
Golden slippers more precious, or half as fair,
On their pink-and-white tiny feet.

Now my darling has grown a dear lady wise,
As all maiden babies should do;
And I read a new tale in the smile of her eyes,
For a lover has come to woo.

O young man so true! you have joy in your kiss,
When your lips to her cheek you press,
As I deem when I measure the old-time bliss
Of my fond baby's tender caress.

How vain the emotions that charm and die,
Delights that unstable prove;
I had rather, than all that my money can buy,
Have a few treasure things to love:
Dear mem'ries for smiles, some for tenderest fears,
As ever I pick and choose,—
Some things that recall my happiest years,
Like my beautiful baby's shoes.

OUR ANNA'S GRAVE.

Ye frost-cold winds that nip the tardy flowers,
And bleach the meadow fields and uplands bare,
Blow softly through the chilled and leafless bowers
That fringe the wave-washed shores by Delaware.
Breathe requiem music softly sweet and low,
And bid the winter fays and fairies tread,
With lightest buskins, where the mantling snow
Shall press the sod above our darling dead.

A gentle pilgrim, worn on life's long way,
Serene, a tired and only transient guest,
In bleak and cold December's early day,
With loving hands we laid her there to rest,
Where spring shall come again, and warmer suns
Spread flowers and harvests on the smiling lea,
Where by low banks the gentle river runs,
And hastening navies seek the swelling sea.

When grace shall greet with smiles the vernal year,
And brooks, released, along the meadows glide,
For her the banished rose shall reappear,
And starlike daisy deck the pastures wide.
When violets slumber while the cricket sings,
What time the shadows drape the eastern sky,
There shall the timid ringdove fold his wings,
And coo for her an evening lullaby.

Thither shall memory the way retrace,
With love for aye renewed, and gentler trust,
As the fond tendril holds in its embrace,
A thing of beauty crumbling into dust.
And thoughts more dear, as years shall pass away
Like billows spent and lost in coming wave,
Shall grace the soul where sleeps the honored clay,
In rest and peace in darling Anna's grave.

LOOK WITHIN.

Never a day should pass in doubt
Of friend once loved, in happier mood;
Faith should not all be lost without
A cause well proved and understood.
All are not false though some untrue;
A seeming wrong may be correct;
Thy varied nature oft review,
And make amend for some neglect.

Never should frown o'ercloud the face,
Nor useless jealousy control;
Anger should never leave a trace
Of serpent trail upon the soul.

All are not bad, though some are vile;
  Thy hope should keep the conscience pure;
Art thou unhappy? try to smile,
  For smiles may work a perfect cure.

Never should charge unkind be made,
  Affecting any, known or not;
Justice, if warped, or long delayed,
  At last may fail or be forgot.
Thou canst not know what others think;
  Wherefore the laugh, or why the moan;
Some bitter cup thou, too, mayst drink,
  For joy is not for thee alone.

SONNET.—(To an unknown young Lady.)

Of charming maidenhood a very pearl
  Dainty of hue and with a lustre rare,
God made thee bright and beautiful, sweet girl
With auburn locks that, wooing, kiss and curl
  Around a forehead as an angel's fair.
Thou art to me like spirit of a dream,
  In every movement, every look precise,
That haunts my musing thought beside the stream
  That winds from Earth through vale of Paradise.
Can one so rich in every gentle charm,
  With aught that is impure, improper mate?
O modest maiden! thoughtful, take alarm,
And guard a virgin soul from every harm,
  Whate'er thy fortune be, or what thy fate.

TO A YOUNG MOTHER.

To you, O happy lady! highly graced,
A precious jewel God hath kindly sent,
Wherewith your yearning heart well were content,
On which His love in living lines is traced.

A gem of price—of beauty full and new,—
Eyes with the sky-tint of the early morn;
Cheeks with the flush of roses fragrant-born,
And dew-moist lips of soft carnation hue.

Can art embody thought so sweetly fair?
Can nature's beauty-work more triumph claim?—
A voice to coo, sometime, the mother-name,
And little hands to fold in baby-prayer.

There's not a boon to mortals ever given:
The sparkling treasures of the Indian fields,
Nor aught that ocean's coral cavern yields,
Can equal this, the dearest gift of Heaven.

O pride without reproach! O peaceful joy!
What angel-thought a purer faith reveals,
Than hers, who lovingly and softly kneels
To gaze upon her slumbering infant boy?

What rich emotions thrill her yearning breast!
What glowing fancies warm her happy heart!
She plans his years of boyhood, like a chart,
And sees, with eyes prophetic, all the rest.

Be it your joy, O mother fond! to know
The rich reality of these bright dreams;
May heavenly grace, with full and tender beams,
Touch this dear flower and bless its early blow.

THE MARINER'S SERENADE.

O'er the waves my shallop lies,
On the bank the cottage stands,
Where my Maud in slumber lies,
Dreaming of the glory-lands.
Waken, Maud, thou bird of May,
Listen to my roundelay.

Swiftly on the moments go,—
Golden moments all to me;
Swiftly out the waters flow,
Cresting toward the moonlit sea.
Waken, Maud, thou bird of May,
Listen to my roundelay.

Safe my bark at anchor rides,
While across the ocean far,
Restless waves and heaving tides
Kiss the setting vesper star.
Waken, Maud, thou bird of May,
Listen to my roundelay.

On the deck, at morning dawn,
I my watch shall faithful keep;
Pensive Maud will pace her lawn,
Gazing sadly o'er the deep.
Waken, Maud, thou bird of May,
Listen to my roundelay.

Soon my bark will fold her wings
By the fair Venitian shore,
Where the dark-eyed maiden sings,
Timing with the dipping oar.

Waken, Maud, thou bird of May,
Listen to my roundelay.

Other eyes will greet me there,
Other fingers may caress,
While from far lagune the air
Wooes with evening's soft caress.
Waken, Maud, thou bird of May,
Listen to my roundelay.

Maud, a last, a fond good-night,
Waft I o'er the waters dark;—
Haste, away! thou shallop light,
Bear me to my waiting bark.
Maud is sleeping, bird of May;
All unheard my roundelay.

SEASONS OF THE SOUL.

SPRING.

To southern skies and lands remote
Pale Winter hastes away;
Again we hear the robin's note
That greets the early May.
The brawling brooks resume their flow,
From icy fetters free,
And dash and gurgle as they go
To seek the distant sea.

The quickened life beneath the sod
Calls for the milder showers,
And upland turf and meadow clod
Now laugh with golden flowers.

The peopled woods and fields give voice,
And loving tribute bring;
And all harmoniously rejoice,
To hail the gentle Spring.

So when redeeming love's embrace
Shall warm the frosted heart,
New hope will hail the tender grace,
And bid the chill depart.
Faith, life and love their joy will tell,
And spirit leaves unfold,
As heaven's mild air dissolves the spell
On germs inert and cold.

—

SUMMER.

Now, panting in the noonday heat,
The bird forgets his song;
The meadow brook, with flow discreet,
Pours noiselessly along.
On far-off skies—pale azure seas—
The gray clouds idly rest,
Like ships that wait the laggard breeze,
Becalmed on ocean's breast.

But night, with cooler mantle spread,
O'er all the dewy scene,
Will softly fan the aching head,
In ministry serene.
The fainting plants will lift their leaves
To catch the mimic rain
Which heaven bestows, and earth receives,
To soothe her fever pain.

So, when the burdened spirit droops,
  Or faints along the road,
Some passing angel ever stoops
  To lift its heavy load.
We shall obtain the grace we need,
  In every trial hour,
If steadfast hope receive the meed,
  And faith accept the shower.

—

AUTUMN.

The Summer rose has blushed and died,
  The Autumn days have come,
The gathered sheaves, in generous pride,
  Proclaim the harvest-home.
The turf, of late so richly dressed
  In green and flowery bloom,
Now in a russet robe shall rest
  Through Winter's storm and gloom.

How haste the joyous hours away!
  The time of toil how soon!
How pleasant is the close of day,
  How fair the harvest-Moon!
The insect pipes his loving note,
  Responsive to his mate;
The lowing herds, from fields remote,
  Come to the farmyard gate.

Sweet Autumn time! O golden mean!
  O best of happy days!
Now nature, in a mood serene,
  Smiles in her gentler ways.

Thou Soul! how full the blessings prove,
To thee so freely given,—
The harvest of a Father's love,
And Autumn sheaves in heaven.

—

WINTER.

The turf, beneath a robe of snow,
In fettered stillness lies;
The evening stars in splendor glow,
And lustrous are the skies.
The icy grasp is on the rill,
The forest leaves are sere,
And woodlands bare and tempests chill
Wail for the dying year.

But why thy plaint, O! troubled heart?
Suppress the rising sigh;
New hope, new peace will joy impart,
For lo! the Spring is nigh.
Warm suns shall lift the Winter hand
From fields and slumbering vales,
And grasses shoot, and flowers expand,
To scent the gentler gales.

So hope should aye withstand the storm;
So love, forever near,
Will sweetly soothe and kindly warm,
When all things else are drear.
O! ever hope and love bestow
Faith's mercy beams once more
On souls beneath the drifting snow,
Or chilled on life's bleak shore!

SUMMER MORNING.

Peerless in splendor Aurora advances,
  Leading her train o'er the wakening world:
Legions of sunlight, with gold-shafted lances,
  Pennons gay-streaming and banners unfurled.
Voices in gladness to swift echoes calling,
  Cadence and swell of the far-away horn,
Mystery-music on spirit ear falling,
  Herald thine advent, O beautiful morn!

Spiced with the odors of palm-bearing islands,
  Lightly thy squadrons, the frolicsome gales,
Charge thro' the leaves of the trees on the highlands,
  Rustle the dew-jeweled brakes in the vales.
Billowing grain-fields with sunbeams are gleaming;
  Orchards are golden with apples and corn;
Song-birds tell tales of their summer-night dreaming;
  All things rejoice with thee, beautiful morn!

Come, O my dear one! with rapture low-singing,
  Come from thy couch and enjoy the glad mirth;
Lo! from the meadows thy lovers are bringing
  Treasures for thee from the bountiful earth.
Brown-tinted shrubs with ripe berries are laden;
  Hasten, ye nymphs in the green forests born,
Give fruits and flowers to my bonnie young maiden,
  Flushed with thy radiance, O beautiful morn!

—

In human life two moods we find
Obtaining in the common mind:
Mercy is weak and justice blind.

NEW METRICAL CALENDAR.

Respectfully dedicated to Julius Cæsar.

In April, June, September,
And also in November,
  But thirty days we mind;
And February we must rate
As numbering only twenty-eight,
Save when, without a fraction o'er,
We can divide the sum by four,
Then, giving February one day more,
  The years complete we find.
In years bissextile girls propose,
By right, among the bashful beaux;
An ancient rule—correct, of course,—
Accepted still, but not in force.

BLANCHE OF GLENORNING.

To the altar they lead her, a young Highland maid,
  All her sighs and reproaches unheeding,
For the old earl would wed her, by parent betrayed,
  While her heart for her lover is pleading.
Though the scorn on her lip and the tear in her eye
  Seem the blending of anguish and warning,
Ne'er a countess so fair with the beauty can vie
  Of the cottage-born Blanche of Glenorning.

Who is he, mailed in armor of steel, that with speed,
  Spurs to rescue, with faithful devotion,
Down the aisle of the vast old cathedral his steed,
  Like a shore-driven wave of the ocean?
It is Donald of Lorn, the true lover and bold,
  All the honor of knighthood adorning;

At the altar he stoops, and his strong arms enfold
The half-fainting Blanche of Glenorning.

Now away thro' the portal and speed at your best,
Faithful courser, well-weighted and rarely,
With the knight in the saddle, the maid on his breast,
You must bear double burden and fairly.
Fleet as wind o'er the crest of Ben Lomond is he,
Strong is Donald in life's happy morning;
And a sweet, gentle captive, and loving is she,
The beautiful Blanche of Glenorning.

SONG OF REQUIEM.

For the literary service at the re-burial of the body of JOHN HOWARD PAYNE.

From beyond vast ocean waves,
From the land of ancient graves,
From a far and foreign shore,
Welcome, welcome evermore.

Earth of home, in honor hold,
Thine for aye, his ashes cold;
Softly, as on mother breast,
Fold them in eternal rest.

Spirit! from the realm sublime,
Pilgrim to this place of time,
Hither come, in mood serene,
When the fields and woods are green,

Greet the faithful friend that waits
Just before the pearly gates

Of thy heaven, the home of peace,
Where all mournful memories cease.

Lo! the nations turn to thee!
Thou art richer now than we:
Million homes to thee belong,
Minstrel of the tender song.

This, a consecrated shrine
For these ashes shall be thine:
Arching heaven its temple dome,
Thine, who sang the song of home.

Ah! to utter words so sweet,
Knowing that thy weary feet
Could not reach the dear abode:
Soul-rest on the heavenly road.

Homeless! thou for kindness made;
Fortune-prospered, fate-betrayed;
Loved—neglected like the flower
Toy of beauty's idle hour!

What sweet hope inspired thy theme?
Whence the angel of thy dream?
Soul of song! thy strains reveal
Thoughts of seraph Israfil.

Didst behold, in vision bright,
Home of youth in summer light?
Didst remember mother's joy,
Loving thee, her gentle boy?

Weary-wandering over Earth,

Stranger to the land of birth,
Thither borne and hither tossed,
Honors won, but comforts lost,

Far from friendly hearth and hand,
Dying in a lonely land,
Oh! how hard the bitter pang
Not to know the joy he sang!

Home, poor wanderer! peril passed;
Sleep, secure from every blast;—
Earth, to thee this precious trust:
Death to silence! dust to dust!

Love his grave, O midnight moon!
Stars of evening, sun of noon,
With your radiant angel eyes
Gazing from admiring skies.

Gentle birds he loved so well,
Fauna of the wooded dell,
Here rehearse your tender woes,
Where caressing hands repose.

As the ruder seasons pass,
Faded flowers and felted grass,
Withered leaves and falling snow,
Over him a mantle throw.

When retires gray winter old,
And the grasses pierce the mold,
When the early robins bring
Tidings of the virgin spring,

Rootlets, threads of nature's loom,
Weave a fragrant robe of bloom;
Shed for him the dew-born tear,
Darlings of the vernal year.

Thus shall passing time relate
Stories of his life and fate:
Spring and summer smiles and showers,
Autumn joys and winter hours.

Million-voiced, and aye, and aye,
Strains of his beloved lay
Chanted here, and evermore,
Echoed from the angel shore,

Wind of winter, summer breeze,
Bird-notes in the swaying trees,
Song of land and song of sea,
These his requiem shall be.

THE ALBATROSS.

Leagues, many a league from the shore flies he,
Albatross, prince of the vast, blue sea;
Wide-spreading the pinions that waft him away,
And free as the wind is their sweep and play.
When the gale blows fiercest and waves toss high,
He swings far aloft with a shrill, wild cry,
Or he stoops to the billows, his chosen home,
And playthings to him are their crests of foam.

His food is the flotsam adrift on the waves,
Thrown up from its bed in the deep, dark caves;

Or the oil that exudes from the monstrous whales,
Or the refuse of barks that are strained by the gales.
His nestlings he leaves to the tenderer care,
Of the mate on the cliff and the rough rocks there,
For he finds on the cradling waves a home,
And a dearer caress from their crests of foam.

The mariner listens his strident cry,
As his bark slips on and the seas dash by;
And sometimes the surge to his feet will fling
A feather wind-torn from the free-bird's wing;
And this he will treasure, for many a day,
As a toy for his loved one, or children's play;
And perchance even albatross dreams of a home
Far over the waves and their crests of foam.

LITTLE BROWN COW.

Written at the Continental Farm, near Philadelphia, Pa., Dec., 1887.

What are you thinking about, brown cow,
As you stand by the apple tree—
Of the fruit that once hung on the bending bough,
When the clover was red on the lea?
Do you dream of the child of your loves and fears,
That is tethered in yonder shed—
Of its beautiful eyes, and its great red ears,
And its straw-littered, cosy bed?

Do you ask why the spring and the summer are done,
And the generous autumn days?
Why the earlier sleep of the setting sun,
That shall waken in morning haze?

Do you think of the ships that go sailing by,
  On the Delaware's sea-bound tide,
That shall fade away, lost in the low, dark sky,
  Or in shadows of night shall hide?

Brown cow, on these beautiful lawns all life
  To you lent for happiness seems;
For you hear not the din of the great world strife,
  And your thoughts are but dreams and dreams.
The ploughman must go to his daily toil,
  Or garner the autumn seed,
The learnéd must write, and the craftsman moil,
  Their loved ones to clothe and feed.

All workmen must delve in the common field,
  Where each is the servant of all;
For the sea must be sailed, and the sod must yield
  Its treasures, whatever befall.
Such as you are the objects of earnest thought,
  As the seasons their works reveal;
If the corn were not garnered the grist were nought:
  Where, then, were your winter meal?

Brown cow, there are duties for all, and you
  Have a mission, whatever you dream;
The young you must nourish, the cud must chew,
  Else where were the dainty cream.
Chew on; of the future let others think,
  For your time is but brief on the lawn:
A little for food, and a little for drink,
  And then 'twill be over and gone.

NOT LOST.

They are not lost whose bodies we lay by,
  Like jewel caskets when the gems are gone;
As well believe that stars at morning die,
  Because they fade and vanish at the dawn.

Not lost, the loved; they go, like lights which burn
  An instant, feebly flicker and expire;
But over death victorious, they return,
  With lamps relighted by love's altar fire.

A little time through wondrous realm to roam,
  To bathe in springs whence cleansing waters flow;
A few short hours to view the heavenly home,
  And rest awhile where heaven's own breezes blow;

To kneel before the footstool of the king,
  Serenely grateful for the life on Earth;
Then coming back on love's immortal wing,
  They tell us of the new, the higher birth.

Thus oft some gentle spirit, pure as light,
  Returns with tidings after its release,
As beautiful as, on Judea's height,
  The ancient messenger proclaiming peace.

And not in vain,—O often not in vain!—
  The loving ministry serene and calm,
To reassure, to ease the mental strain,
  And soothe the troubled heart with healing balm.

I deem the soul's abode not unknown sphere,
  To which, when life is ended, I shall go;

Faith tells me the eternal home is near,
And every darling thought would have it so.

TO THE PRESIDENT'S BRIDE.

Bride of our President, to thee
The nation turns with bended knee,
Craving the grace to touch thy hand,
Fair and first lady of the land.
It greets thee, and rich homage brings;
It lays before thee offerings;
Best wishes, pure, and richly set,
Jeweled in fancy's coronet.

Wafted across wide ocean waves,
O'er pearl-strewn fields and coral caves,
Thou camst in answer to the call
Of love, subdued, in gentle thrall.
So wings the homing bird its flight;
So comes, through shade, the ray of light.
O, dove at home! be thou the dream
Of him whose brow reflects the beam.

Queen in a realm whose boundaries lie
Remote, unseen by mortal eye,
To one alone life's better part,
Rule thou in every gentle heart.
So, musing of a dearer reign
Than one o'er merely Earth domain,
Content the nation turns to thee,
With loyal soul and bended knee.

Washington, D. C., June, 1886.

THE LAST DREAM.

Of what is the old farmer dreaming to-night,
As he naps in his easy chair,
Where the glow of the hickory wood-fire bright
Falls soft on his snow-white hair?
Do memories come
Of the happier home,
When the loved were all gathered there?

For the children are sailing the ocean of life,
Far out o'er its varied deeps;
For the clay-cold frame of the faithful old wife
In the silence eternal sleeps;
And, in stilly embrace,
The most of his race
Lie under the churchyard heaps.

Does a low-whispered word, like a faint echo-voice,
Seem to come from that years-ago hour
When he won the soft hand of the girl of his choice,
The beautiful village flower?
She was modest and sweet,
Like a lily complete,
And her true heart was treasure and dower.

In his dream does he conquer the turf on the lea,
That the meadow rich tribute may yield?
Perhaps his shrunk limbs, as when active and free,
Lead the cradlers adown the field,
Or the flail he flings,
Or the axe he swings,
Which none but the strong can wield.

Does he dream that the laborers merrily pass
From their toil as the night draws nigh,
While his tottering feet o'er the yielding grass
Move heavy and lingeringly,
As the aged stag
Must loiter and lag
While the young herd is passing by?

Poor, tired old man! you have journeyed far,
And well has your race been run;
The good wife awaits you, the gates are ajar,
And your heaven is almost won.
You may sounder repose
Ere the deeper snows,
Perchance before morrow sun.

Lo! now as the flickering fire-flame dies,
And shadows creep over the floor,
The world is shut out from those wearied eyes,
As it never has been before.
How tranquil he seems!
O! sweet be his dreams,
For he sleeps—to awake no more.

JAMIE BOY OF TENNESSEE.

Jamie boy of Tennessee,
In thy cradle cosy,
Sweet as baby lad can be,
Chubby-cheeked and rosy;
Art thou now in beauty land
Full of moonlight beaming,

Onward led by fairy hand,
In thy happy dreaming?

Jamie boy of Tennessee,
Dost thou love the fairy
That so gaily leadeth thee,
Fleet of foot and airy?
Is the hand that presseth thine,
In thy fancy roving,
Soft as that fond touch benign,
Mamma's kiss so loving?

Jamie boy of Tennessee,
Is the landscape fairer?
In that realm of mystery
Are the flowerets rarer,—
Have they sweeter scent than those
In the garden growing,
Than the perfume of the rose
By thy window blowing?

Jamie boy of Tennessee,
In thy skyward flying
Dost thou hear the minstrelsy
To thine own replying?
Are the angel strains so clear,
Softly breathed and wooing,
Sweeter than, to baby ear,
Mamma's love-notes cooing?

Jamie boy of Tenneesee,
Hie thou back from roaming;
Come on light wings joyously,

Like a sweet dove homing.
Stoop to Earth from golden skies,
Where the angel bore thee,
And behold, with tender eyes,
Mamma bending o'er thee.

BOOTH, THE ASSASSIN.

What demon sent thee to this world of ours?
Thou imp malignant! serpent fang of fate!
Thou gangrene rot that poisons and devours!
Thou brute, of fell intent and deadly hate!
Not he who scorned to yield to God's control,
But fled, o'erwhelmed, with rage in hell to live;
Thou canst not say he gave thee such a soul;
For nothing half as bad could Satan give.

Whence camst thou? Wherefore such a blot as thou?
A thing so foul that charity disdains
To class thee even with him upon whose brow
Mute horror hangs in dark and damning stains.
Thou canst not say he prompted thee to kill,
For crime like thine surpasses Satan's greed;
No; 'twas thine own unurged, accursed will,—
Thine the conception, thine alone the deed.

The viper will not use his venom fang,
The dread tarantula will never harm,
The asp will not inflict the deadly pang,
Except when moved by danger, or alarm.
The foul hyena prowls around the grave;
The crocodile makes war upon the blind;

The unowned mongrel cur is sometimes brave;
What these of vileness lack in thee we find.

What! at the peaceful hour of evening gray,
When hungry beasts go out to seek their game,
Without one motive to assault and slay,
Save hope vindictive to direct thine aim!
No mist was on thy mind, except the cloud
That must have shadowed thine unholy birth!
A soul! thou wert not with a soul endowed;
For thou wert but a mass of vilest earth.

A patriot, thou! low trickster of the stage,
Mouthing a sentiment to gloss thine act!
Shame to a Borgia's foul but grander rage;
Shame to an idiot's cunning and his tact.
Oh! in the range of all that God hath made,
With life endowed, since life on Earth began—
Children of sunlight, or malarial shade,
Nought has been nobler, nought as vile as man.

Go to thy cave, wherever that may be,
Nor come, dark spirit, to the eye of Heaven;
Dwell in thy cloud through all eternity,
Nor dare to think thy crime can be forgiven.
Mercy gives hope that man, however low,
May be ennobled by redeeming grace,
That vile men may, in time, to virtue grow,
But thou, accursed! thou art not of our race.

—

O Muse! let pity plead; forgive the strain
Wrung from my soul by sorrow's keenest pain.
Providence, R. I., May, 1865.

GRACE BEFORE DINNER.—[*Take your choice.*]

We earned this food by toil and sweat;
Let us give thanks for what we get,
And humbly live within our means.—
Wife, pass around the pork and greens.

—

We gained this food by honest labor
Performed, thank God, by toiling neighbor.
Thus to divine decree we stoop.—
John, tell the cook to serve the soup.

DEAD AT MOUNT McGREGOR.

Written while the bells were tolling for the death of GEN. GRANT, July 23, 1885.

Toll! toll! toll!
Ye slowly-swinging bells;
A passing human soul
Calls for your solemn knells.
With honors full of bloom
The chieftain sinks to rest;—
Give place, expectant tomb,
Place for another guest.

Toll! toll! toll!
Ye mournful passing-bells;
Far as your echoes roll,
Bear requiem farewells.
Say to the listening world,
With softly murmurous breath,
Another flag unfurled
Is in the hall of Death.

Toll! toll! toll!
Ye deep, sonorous bells;
Not as with tale of dole
That sad-voiced mourner tells.
Lo! fame's great congress waits
To see the dead arise;—
Swing wide, Walhalla gates,
A hero mounts the skies.

SONG OF THE SAMIOT'S WIFE.

Hadst thou not wooed me, darling, my poor heart
Would still be vainly sighing for its mate;
Nor could I hope for life's supremer part,
To share thy fortune, or to mourn thy fate.
I scarce can teach my lips my joy to prove,
My trust in thee, anear or when afar;
Thou art mine own; the fountain of my love;
My morning sunlight and my evening star.

Had I not loved thee, darling, dost thou think
Thy life had been so blessed with happy years?
O! better far from Lethe's fount to drink,
Than not to know love's transports or its fears.
I watch thy bark that cleaves the restless seas,
Obedient to thy sail, or to thine oar;
I teach our young, that gather round my knees,
The song of welcome as thou near'st the shore.

Hadst thou not wed me, darling, would thy skill
Now gather treasures from the coral caves?
Then I, perhaps, were hopeless maiden still,
And thou a waif adrift upon the waves.

O! better choice were love's pure, peaceful ways,
  Than aimless, loveless over Earth to roam;
A dearer joy to learn, through happy days,
  The blessings of contentment and a home.

Did I not love thee, darling, would I train,
  Beside my jasmine bower, the fruitful vine,
That thou, reclining there at eve, mayst drain
  The cup high brimming with our Samian wine?
Nor would we now behold, with tender eyes,
  Our nestling treasures, as they lie asleep
In smiling peace, or dreaming baby sighs
  For thee far out upon the treacherous deep.

TO MRS. JOSEPHINE AMMON,

Imprisoned for "contempt of court," alleged, in that she refused to reveal the place of retreat of a persecuted woman who had claimed her protection.

God give thee strength, brave woman, to endure
  The taunt of power, the venom of its scorn,
And keep thee to thy sacred purpose sure,
  To shield the sufferer, soothe the soul forlorn.

The stubborn doors that shut thee from the world,
  Are but as mists that veil a summer even,
Beyond which fairer clouds, in light impearled,
  Are glorified by radiant stars of heaven.

Locks, bolts and prison bars are but the tools
  Which, forged for justice, oft their aim abuse;
Tortures and chains are arguments of fools,
  Which, powerless else, they seek for wrong to use.

If they be weak who dare to brave the law
In doing right, how stern the law's decree!
If they be strong, there's many a legal flaw
Shall cover acts of wrong and treachery.

If urgent be the call, well understood,
Why wait the form and bide the law's delay?
The proper time to do an act of good
Is when the pressing need shall point the way.

Thou art thy sister's guardian; not the man
She shuns with trembling limbs and fainting soul,
Who sneaks behind the shield of law, to plan,
To do an act of tyrannous control.

As mercy prompted, thou wert brave to dare
The peril of a deed defiant done;
So in thy prison be thou strong to bear
The woe which menaces the anxious one.

What though the angel come not, as of old,
To break the prison bonds and set thee free;
Thy grand devotion, to the sisters told,
Shall urge the hour of woman's liberty.

Feb. 15, 1888.

EPIGRAM.

Let us smile when we can,—ever say unto sorrow:
Get thee gone from us now; hie away till the morrow.
Thus the wisdom of wisdoms each day shall we learn,
That our small woes should vanish and never return.

MORNING DREAM.

Lutes that have long neglected lain,
With saddest, sweetest notes complain,
When, light as passing zephyr wings,
Familiar fingers sweep the strings.

With careless touch and little art
We wake the spell that thralled the heart,
As through the chords at random stray
The notes of some long silent lay.

And sweet to feel the lingering thrill
Of early joys within us still;
Then pleasures past return once more,
As rich in feeling as before.

With kindling warmth our bosoms burn,—
Like gathered pearls the notes return,
In tuneful measures, one by one,
Till all the strains successive run.

Thus oft a dream—some little thing—
An angel thought, with folded wing,
We find on memory's storied page,
Gray-silvered with the dust of age.

Again we press the verdant sod,
In years long gone with rapture trod,
With one fond heart beside us there,
Soft-beating unto love's own prayer.

A lily bell that hangs unseen
Where birds their ruffled plumage preen,
Can wing the soul o'er ocean wide,
With perfume shed at eventide.

A flickering taper's modest blaze
Is as the light of other days
That beamed afar for wanderer lone,
Listening to winter evening's moan.

A pleasant smile, a kindly word,
Note of sweet music, faintly heard,
Perchance a sigh, will weave a spell
Once dear and still remembered well.

The bird that sang one sunny morn,
Where dewdrops lay and flowers were born,
Trilled in my dream of days gone by,
A long-forgotten melody;

And something that my life had lost:
A light from youth my vision crossed;
And, backward borne on that sweet song,
My pilgrim spirit passed along;

Back through the whirl of busy years;
Through days of triumphs, hours of tears;
Back through the time when boyish ways
Were lost in manhood's graver days.

Sweet was the song; but ah! more dear
The soft bird-notes I seemed to hear,
Far back, those earlier days among,
When love was born and joy was young;

When, fresh with life's rich morning bloom,
I wandered through the lowland broom,
Intent on careless youth's delight,
And heard the wild-fowl's whirring flight.

And wind that waved the rustling brake,
Came charged with odors from the lake
By lilies starred, of tender dyes,
Like cloudless midnight's myriad eyes.

Gay bob-o-links, along the meads,
Sang on the bending, swaying reeds,
And swallows, on their steady wings,
Circled around in mazy rings.

Bright maidens, in the generous wealth
Of sparkling eyes and fragrant health,
In witching grace and modest ways,
Shared with me all my frolic days.

And one I loved,—our village pearl,
A true, warm-hearted, blooming girl,—
And deemed that love would still engage
My riper thoughts in coming age.

Too dear the warbler's song—too sweet,—
The rising hum of busy street,
And flushing sky proclaimed the dawn,
And bird and morning dream were gone.

O joy of dream! Come, vanished youth,
And cheer me with your trust and truth,
Until you pass, in light serene,
Across life's closing, evening scene.

TO THE WOOD'S-BLUEBELL.

Pure little flower! I love thee well;
Thy beauty-language seems to tell
The tale of long-gone, happy times,

When fairies sang their merry rhymes,
Or danced upon a moonlit bank,
And from thy cup the nectar drank.
Ah! tales of boyhood! Well I deem
Thee best of life's long, fitful dream,
The days when fancy gave me wings—
As real then as later things.
In vain my yearning eyes explore
These paths,—the fairies dance no more;
Gone all that made this spot so fair,
Save thou, sweet bluebell, blooming there.

THE SONG OF LIFE.

Tell me! O fleecy snow,
  Around me lightly falling:
Where have the darlings gone—
Flowers of the verdant lawn,
That fed my gentle fawn,
  So joyous at my calling?
Lost, withered and decayed,
  They passed away in dying;
In robe of white arrayed,
  My spell is on them lying.
Vain, snow, the tale you tell;
  They know their loves and duties;
Warm suns will break your spell,
  And wake my garden beauties.

Tell me! O passing years
  That life so swiftly measure,
Where ends the flight of time?
Is there no realm sublime,

Where life renews its prime,
With all of hope and pleasure?
Like waves that reach the shore,
Succeeding waves forever,
We break and are no more,—
Dissolve, returning never.
Ah! years, your mocking voice
Sounds only note of sadness;
I shall again rejoice,
And taste the cup of gladness.

Tell me, ye radiant stars,
In yonder heaven eternal,
Where are the friends I've lost,
Chilled by Earth's deadly frost?
Have they your pathway crossed—
Your field of light supernal?
Vain! vain, thou yearning soul;
Thou canst not learn their story;
As circling on we roll,
We tell no tale but glory.
Ah! stars, their flight they wing
Beyond ye, far ascending;
With them I yet shall sing
The Song of Life unending.

Faith without reason—an uncertain guide,—
May lead aright, or trusting soul betray;
So walk the blind through desert wilds untried,
So fall, perhaps, or stumble by the way.
But this we know, where'er the pathway trod,
Faith may be trusted when it leads to God.

ROSE OF THE SHANNON.

O the lark was in tune, and the morning serene,
And the valley was clad in its garment of green,
When I pressed her, love-yielding, again to my heart,
Ere I turned from the land of my birth to depart.
And she gave me a tress from her soft golden hair,
And bade me the gift on my bosom to wear,
That my soul might return o'er the blue-rolling sea,
Where the Rose of the Shannon is blooming for me.
And my soul goes a-wandering over the sea,
Where the Rose of the Shannon is blooming for me.

Ye winds from the land where my spirit finds rest,
Bring treasures of hope to my home in the west;
O love! that with tender thought soothes all my pain,
Bear back to her message again and again,
Fond maiden, that waiteth, so tender and true,
For the bark that shall waft me again to her view.
But in vain does she gaze o'er the far-spreading sea,
Dear Rose of the Shannon that waiteth for me.
O lullaby music! go up from the sea,
To the Rose of the Shannon that waiteth for me.

The soft pressure of lips that she tenderly gave,
Where the river was wooing the shore with its wave,
Still is sweet on mine own, driving sorrow away,
Making dreams of the night soft as slumbering day;
And a voice from her soul cometh low to mine ear,
That tells me the hour of our meeting is near;
For a bark is now urging its flight o'er the sea,
That shall bring the sweet Rose of the Shannon to me.
O! swift be its flight, ever gentle the sea,
For the Rose of the Shannon is coming to me!

MY SAILOR BOY.—[For Music.]

Waves of ocean, moonlit gleaming,
Rock my sailor boy to rest,
Where he lies in slumber dreaming,
Cradled on thy peaceful breast.
Gather loving ones anear him,
While his spirit homeward flies:
Hands caressing, lips that cheer him,
Smiles of joy and beaming eyes.
Billow, the billow,
Cradled on the billow,
Heaven protect my sailor boy.

When rude tempest foes are clashing,
And the riven clouds reveal
Fires of heaven flaming, flashing
To the awful thunder-peal,
Waves of ocean, safely waft him,
Till the haven shall appear,
And, like gleeful ones abaft him,
Laughing, chide our tender fear.
Billow, the billow,
Cradled on the billow,
Heaven protect my sailor boy.

The most that can be said of man
Is this: whate'er his station,
His life is based on nature's plan,
In closest imitation.
If pure of soul, exalted he—
No work of God is meeter;
If base, no beast of low degree,
Nor no vile thing completer.

THE WEB OF LIFE.

She is feeble and old,
And the cottage is cold,
Where she telleth the hours away,
Alone in her toil,
In her patient moil
And weariness, day by day.
Her frame is slight,
And her hair is light,
Like the gray of the winter leaves,
And she plies the loom,
In her ancient room,
And she sings as her web she weaves:
"Warp and weft,—right and left,
So shall my shuttle go;
O Thou, Divine! may this web of mine
Be white, like the falling snow.

"Once was I young,
And fair among
The maids of the olden time;
My hopes were new,
And my heart was true,
And merrily ran my rhyme.
The lad that I loved
My blessing proved,
And he was my joy and pride
For fifty years;—
Ah! many the tears
That I shed when my good man died.
Warp and weft;—right and left,
So shall my shuttle go;

O Thou Divine! may this web of mine
Be pure as the falling snow.

"My children four!
They come no more
Where the old hearth-embers burn;
For the river is wide,
And strong is its tide,
And their frail barks cannot return.
All gone,—all dead!
And three were wed,
And one in his youth passed by.
There are five low mounds
In the churchyard grounds
Where my dear ones together lie.
Warp and weft;—right and left,
So shall my shuttle go;
O Thou divine! may this web of mine
Be pure as the falling snow.

"In the web of years
There are sighs and tears,
That are oft to the world unknown;
For there's many a knot
In the hard, hard lot
Of her who must weave it alone.
Alone? soul! No!
Every cloud of woe
Is set in a sky of blue;
For the heaviest rod
In the hand of God
On the olive of mercy grew.
Warp and weft,—right and left,

So shall my shuttle go;—
O Thou, Divine! in this shroud of mine
Let me slumber beneath the snow."

And the sun, by day,
And the moon's dim ray
Shed light in a lonely room;
For the weft is run,
And her work is done,
And still is the ancient loom.
Her web is as clear
As an angel's tear,—
If ever the angels weep,—
And it wraps her bones.—
There are six white stones
Where she and her loved ones sleep.
Thus pass we along with the shifting throng,
And ever life-shuttles go.—
God keep us aright! May our weft be white,
And pure as the drifting snow.

TREASURES OF MEMORY.

When the fond one, loved so well,
Speaks in tones of tender cheer,
Pure and sacred is the spell
That charms the listening lover's ear.
Those soft accents evermore
Shall be rarest melody,
While the harp of life shall pour
The varied strains of memory.

Maiden eyes in light express
Thoughts which only love should dare;
And her lips their sweets confess,
Like rose-perfume on morning air.
O! to heart, and soul alone,
Such revealment, pure and free,
Shall, when Earth has darker grown,
Be light and kiss of memory.

Faithful love's benign demand
Bids the doubt, the fear depart,
When the pressure soft of hand
Has lulled to peace the troubled heart.
That soft touch, as years unfold
Fate or fortune, still shall be,
When the hand is growing old,
The dear caress of memory.

FAIR AMERICA.

By order of the "Bartholdi Monument" committee, the original copy of this poem was deposited in the corner stone of the pedestal of the statue of "Liberty Lighting the World," on Bedloe's Island, N. Y. Harbor.

Fair America! bright was the morn of thy fame,
And the sun of thy triumph ascended in light:
For the fathers then dared by their deeds to proclaim
That the freedom of man is a God-given right.
And the voices responsive are echoing still,
Over Earth where the peoples exult in the thrill,
As they gaze on thy free-waving banner unfurled,
With the splendor of stars that illumine the world.

In the perils and woes of thine earliest days,
O America! strong were thy foemen arrayed;

But thy faith was sublime, and, by marvelous ways,
  Was thy liberty won from the spoiler dismayed.
And the laurel of glory on Washington's brow,
By all nations approved, is thine heritage now;
Saints and sages salute thee with banner unfurled
With the splendor of stars that illumine the world.

A republic new-born,—France, with histories old,
  Sends a gift unto thee, with fraternal embrace.—
Hail! thou promise of peace unto millions untold,
  Who shall gaze evermore on thy beautiful face.
Guide the pilgrim of liberty over the sea,—
And thou, country, defend him that cometh to thee,
With the sword and the shield, all thy banners unfurled,
With the splendor of stars that illumine the world.

O America! God will His blessings bestow,
  And thy triumph secure shall forever prevail;
If thy garment be white, as in ages ago,
  When Columbus pressed onward his storm-daring sail.
Bid thy glad maids to sing of the land of their birth,
Till the sisters respond from all regions of Earth,
Where thy chieftains are bearing thy banner unfurled,
With the splendor of stars that illumine the world.

Fair America! crowned as with radiance divine,
  What the fathers achieved may thy wisdom retain;
Still the star on thy brow beam with promise benign,
  And prosperity grace all thy favored domain.
As the years onward move through the ages of time,
When the free nations march to thy music sublime,

Point thy prestige all-glorious, thy banner unfurled,
With the splendor of stars that illumine the world.

IF WE HAD KNOWN.

If we had known, ere we had done
  Some things which we regret too late,
That threads of evil, blindly spun,
  Might darken through our web of fate;
Had we more highly prized the gift
  Of life, there might not, could not be,
These dearest hopes and loves adrift,
  Like flotsam on a restless sea.

Had we been moved by friendship's fears,
  Or touched by love's despairing sigh,
Perhaps the tempest shocks of years
  Had wrecked us less in passing by.
How had we striven to subdue
  And banish all alluring foes,
Remembering that life's evening view
  Of Earth should end in soul-repose.

Yes! had we known—had we been told
  By friend believed, or light within,
What we should learn while growing old,
  How different might our lives have been.
False guides would not have led astray,
  Nor snares have tripped our wandering feet,
Friendship abuse, nor love betray
  With rapture feigned, too dear, too sweet.

To count and measure, one by one,

The passing days, at eventide,
By tasks well wrought, by duty done,
Had better been than all beside.
Submissive bow, O soul! nor dare
Arraign the will that ordered so;
Mercy and Love must heed the prayer:
"Father! we did not, could not know."

SONG OF THE HINDU MAIDEN.

If I were a princess, and saw thee afar,
I would class thee with those who have radiant wings;
As a peri, Earth-prisoned, in love with a star,
Would regard it as best of all beautiful things.
I would sigh for thee, haste to thee, knowing no fear
Save a tender desire to be pure in thy sight,
As the lily betrays the sweet joy of a tear
In a love-folded dewdrop, revealed to the light.

If I were a saint, and thou camest to me,
As a pilgrim of love, to adore at the shrine,
I would open my heart's inner temple to thee,
And reveal all its treasures, and all should be thine.
Do the souls of the lovers, in world beyond this,
Still remember the joys they have earlier known?
Let me lose myself there in a measureless bliss:
Love's nirvana—repose!—and be only thine own.

It were better to beg than to borrow,
When you know that you cannot repay;
For an honest, contented to-morrow
May be spoiled by a lying to-day.

MY LADY DEAR.—[*Serenade.*]

Sleep, sweetly sleep, my lady dear,
  While evening's moon like silver glows,
And stars look down from skies more clear
  Than gaudy daylight splendor shows.
Zephyr is winging over the sea;
  Perfumes, by wooing roses spent,
Come to thy pillow breathing on thee,
  And night with love is eloquent.
Sleep, sweetly sleep, my lady dear;
    Sleep, sleep, sleep.

Dream, dream of me, my lady dear;
  Whisper fond words of tender tone,
Such as a lover true should hear
  From gentle lady all his own.
Vows that were spoken long, long ago,
  On moonlit lawn, with love caress,
In softest cadence murmured should flow
  From fragrant lips that kiss to bless.
Dream, dream of me, my lady dear;
    Dream, dream, dream.

SPIRIT'E.—[*For Music.*]

While mildly beams the evening star
  Above the dewy, distant lea,
O thou pure spirit! from afar,
  In radiant beauty come to me.
Ah! tender joy!—a rapture thrill
  Steals o'er me, like the gentle charm
When lips their fragrant balm distil,
  Allaying fluttering love's alarm.

Come, faithful one. The placid Moon
  Ascends among the sister spheres,
As when our souls received the boon
  Of love in life's young, joyous years.
Again, in dreamy woodland glade,
  Shall love and thought be innocent,
As when together there we strayed
  At eve, and hope was eloquent.

How fondly faithful memory dwells
  On songs we sang to music rare,
Whose notes, like chime of distant bells,
  Seem lingering on the vibrant air.
O often leave the sister throng
  Of angels in the realm sublime,
And come to me with some dear song
  We sang in dreamy twilight time.

WHITTIER.

Mourn, sister Muses, in your sacred grove,
  And drop your tears along the dewy sod,
For him who purely lived on Earth, who strove,
  To sing the songs best pleasing unto God.

A gentle soul, a true and truthful friend
  Has passed away beyond the distant spheres,
To where the hymn of life shall never end,
  Nor strength grow feebler with the flight of years.

How pure his strains! as though an angel's wings
  Had swept the harp poised in celestial air,
When his deft fingers, wandering o'er the strings,
  Evoked the tuneful spirit slumbering there.

How true his thought to catch the higher tone;
How swift his pen to write the thrilling line;
Faith, loyalty and virtue were his own,
With mood and mien devoted and benign.

Heaven gains a seraph when a poet dies!
Another strain, a new, melodious chord
Are added to the swelling harmonies
Where angel choirs, responding, praise the Lord.

ISRAEL PUTNAM.

Written while standing near the grave of the old hero, in Brooklyn, Conn., June 10, 1863.

Man of the age heroic! when the steel
Of patriot yeomen dared the British foe,
And forced his shattered, bleeding ranks to feel
The shock of vengeance, giving blow for blow!
Who backward flung, as offerings to the waves,
Hireling and chief whose feet oppressed our shores,
Teaching that children never can be slaves,
Whom the brave mothers of our country bore;—

Oh! once again for thine unconquered arm,
To point the path and launch the bolts of war;
Thy clarion voice to sound the loud alarm;
Thine eagle eye to see the foe afar.
If call could wake thee from thy slumber deep,
If wails of praying souls could reach thine ears,
How would thy quickened dust the promise keep,
Ancient, still loyal in these later years!

Can Earth-born cares the generous thoughts engage
Of patriots passed beyond the bounds of time?

Then unforgotten is the martial rage
  That nerved thy frame with energy sublime.
For even the blissful fields of heaven must share,
  In some degree, the tumult here on Earth;
And thou of dauntless soul must yearn to bare
  The arm of vengeance for thy land of birth.

A nameless board and shapeless marks the spot
  Where sleeps thy mortal, O heroic chief!
Yet for thy meed of fame it matters not,
  And eulogy of records is too brief.
No towering shaft, nor grand elegiac verse,
  Our nation's gratitude to thee display;
But fathers here thy story shall rehearse
  To listening children till the latest day.

SONNET.—[*Mother.*]

O mother face! O smiling mother eyes!
  O lips low-murmuring words of tenderness!
What pure emotions, peaceful thoughts arise,
With trust unyielding, faith that never dies,
  While memory blends them with her love-caress.
Life were not worth the task of tempting fate,
  Did we not know that her unwavering heart
As fondly beats beyond the pearly gate,
  As when it formed Earth's purer, better part.
Home is the court of paradise,—a place
  Made sacred by her own peculiar care;
Nor could the soul its highest virtue trace,
Remembering not her placid, happy face,
  Nor dream of heaven without the mother there.

TO THE LIBERTY BELL.

O Liberty Bell! O Liberty Bell!
My heart leaps to thee, and my tears up-well,
My bosom seems heaving like billowy swell,
And my soul is o'erflowing with musical rhymes,—
Love-tears! dear emotions! glad songs of the times
When thy peal gave the tone to America's chimes;
When the fathers inspired spake for land and for sea,
And, by message immortal, proclaimed the decree
That the Earth is the Lord's and His people are free!

O Liberty Bell! O Liberty Bell!
Evermore shall the echoes of history tell
Of thy clangor sonorous, of tyranny's knell.
Thine the signal to patriots firm in accord,
To arise and escape from the thraldom abhorred,
The alarum of war, and a prayer to the Lord.
Then the wise men ordained the new era of light,
And, with faith in the promise, the triumph of right,
Led their sons to the armies and shared in the fight.

O Liberty Bell! O Liberty Bell!
Mute now, save to whisper, like voice of the shell
Which we pilfer from ocean, that all is well.
Hushed else unto silence! Nor shouldst thou again,
As thou didst in the full tide of jubilee then,
Speak with clangorous voice to the children of men.
Thy peal that proclaimed that the fetters were riven,
Now attuned for the ears of the blest should be given,
Sweetly pure in the full chimes harmonic of Heaven.

To think and know, nor do the thing we ought,
Is coward knowledge—only stunted thought.

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